TWO

Treatises:

The First of

FEAR,

From *Isa.* 8. *verſ.* 2. 13. and part of the 14.

The Second, The

Righteous Man's Refuge

IN THE

Evil DAY.

From *Isaiah* 26. *Verſe* 20.

By *John Flavell* Miniſter of the Goſpel

GLASGOW.
Printed By *ROBERT SANDERS*, one of His Majeſties Printers. 168[illegible]

A Practical Treatise OF FEAR.

Wherein the various *Kinds, Uses, Causes, Effects,* and *Remedies* thereof are distinctly opened and prescribed, for the Relief and Encouragement of all those that fear God in these Doubtful and Distracting Times.

By *John Flavell* Minister of the *Gospel.*

Say unto them that are of a fearful heart, be strong, Fear not, Behold your God will come with a vengeance, even God with a recompence, he will come and save you, Isa. 35. v. 4.

Intellige in te esse etiam fortitudinem spiritus, quomodo & infirmitatem carnis, ac jam hinc scias quid unde facias, & quid cui subjicias, infirmum scilicet fortis. Tertul. Adv. Gentes.

Glasgow, Printed By *Robert Sanders,* 1684.

107

13/8/1941

To the

Right Worſhipful

Sir *John Hartop*, Knight And BARONET.

Sir,

AMong all the Creatures God hath made (Devils only excepted) Man is the moſt apt and able to be his own tormentor; and of all the Scourges with which he lasheth and afflicteth both his Mind and Body, none is found ſo cruel and intollerable as his own Fears. The worſe the Times are like to be, the more need the Mind hath of Succour & Encouragement, to confirm and fortifie it for hard encounters, but from the worſt proſpect, Fear inflicts the deepeſt and moſt dangerous wounds upon the mind of Man, cutting the very Nerves of its paſsive fortitude, and bearing ability.

The grief we ſuffer from Evil felt, would be light and eaſie, were it not incenſed by Fear; Reaſon would do much, and Religion more, to demulce and lenifie our ſorrows, did not Fear betray the ſuccour of both. And it is from Things to come, *that this proſpecting Creature raiſeth up to himſelf vaſt Hopes, and Fears; If he have a fair and encouraging Proſpect of Serene and proſperous Dayes, from the* Scheme *and Poſition of ſecond Cauſes, Hope immediately fills his heart with*

107

13/8/1891

To the

Right Worſhipful

Sir *John Hartop*, Knight

And BARONET.

Sir,

AMong all the Creatures God hath made (Devils only excepted) Man is the moſt apt and able to be his own tormentor; and of all the Scourges with which he laſheth and afflicteth both his Mind and Body, none is found ſo cruel and intollerable as his own Fears. The worſe the Times are like to be, the more need the Mind hath of Succour & Encouragement, to confirm and fortifie it for hard encounters, but from the worſt proſpect, Fear inflicts the deepeſt and moſt dangerous wounds upon the mind of Man, cutting the very Nerves of its paſſive fortitude, and bearing ability.

The grief we ſuffer from Evil felt, would be light and eaſie, were it not incenſed by Fear; Reaſon would do much, and Religion more, to demulce and lenifie our ſorrows, did not Fear betray the ſuccour of both. And it is from Things to come, *that this proſpecting Creature raiſeth up to himſelf vaſt Hopes, and Fears; If he have a fair and encouraging Proſpect of Serene and proſperous Dayes, from the* Scheme *and Poſition of ſecond Cauſes, Hope immediately fills his heart with*

chearinesse, and displayes the signals of it in his very face, answerable to that fair benign Aspect of Things; But if the face of things to come be threatning and inauspicious, Fear gains the Ascendant over the mind, an unmanly and unchristian faintnesse pervades it, and among the many other mischiefs it inflicts, this is not the least; That it brings the evil of to morrow upon to day, and so makes the duties of to day wholly unserviceable to the evils of to morrow: which is much as if a man having an intricate and difficult businesse cut out for the next day, which requires the utmost intention both of his Mind and Body, and (haply might be prosperously managed, if both were duly prepared) should lie all the night restlesse, and disquieted about the Event, torturing and spending himself with his own presaging Fears, so that when the day is come, and the businesse calls for him; his strength is no way equal to the Burden of it, but he faints and fails under it.

There is indeed an excellent use that God makes of our Fears to stimulate our slothful hearts to greater vigilance, and preparation for Evils, and there is a mischievous use Satan makes of our Fears, to cast us under Despondency, and unbecoming Pusillanimity; And I reckon it one of the great difficulties of Religion, to cut by a Threed here, and so to manage our selves under threatning or doubtful Providences, as to be touched with so much sense of those approacing Evils, as may prepare us to bear them; and yet to enjoy that constancy and firmnesse of mind in the worst times, that may answer the excellent principles we are professedly Governed by.

These

These last times are certainly the most perillous times; Great things are yet to be acted upon the Stage of this World, before it be taken down, and the Scena ante-penultima, *latter end, I say, not the last, will be a Tragedy. There is an* Ultima clades adhuc metuenda, *a dismal slaughter of the Witnesses of Christ, yet to be expected: The last bite of the cruel Beast will be deadly, and if we flatter not our selves, all things seem to be disposing themselves in the course of Providence towards it.*

But Sir, *if our union with Christ be sure in it self, and sure to us also; if Faith give us the dayly Visions and Prælibations of the World to come, what well composed Spectators shall we be of these Tragedies! Let things be tossed* Sursque, deque, *and the Mountains cast into the midst of the Sea, yet then the assured Christian may sing his Song upon* Alamoth, *A Song composed for God's hidden ones. This so poiseth and steddies the mind, that we may enjoy the comfort and tranquillity of a resigned will, when others are at their wits end.* Psa. 46.

With design to promote this blessed frame in my own and others hearts in these frightful times, I meditated, and now publish this small Tract, to which a dear Friend (from whom I have often had the fair Idea *and Character of your excellent Spirit) hath occasioned the prefixing of your worthy Name; I beg pardon for such an unusual presumption, as also your Charity in censuring the Faults that will appear in it, when it shall come under so exact and judicious an eye; it may be useful, though it be not elegant; its seasonableness is its best com-*

mendation, and its aim better than its performance; As for you, Sir, I hope Faith hath placed your Soul in that Serene and happy station where Seneca *fancied moral Vertue to have placed a good man,* Fatendum est, cacumine Olympi constitutus, supra ventos & procellas, & omnes res humanas. *Above the Storms and Tempests; of this unquiet and distracting world; but there are many gracious persons at this day, labouring under their own Fears, and whose hearts are ready to fail with looking for those things that are coming to try them that dwell upon the Earth; and possibly somewhat of relief may be administred to many such by this discourse: Some bivious and staggering Souls may be established; Some discouraged and fainting Spirits may be revived: some doubts may be dissolved, that have long perplexed gracious hearts. Whatever use it may be of to any, I humbly call in the aid of your Prayers to my own, for a special blessing upon it, and remains, Sir,*

Yours to Honour,

Love and Serve you,

John Flavell.

John Sutton

A

A Practical Treatise OF FEAR, &c.

Isaiah 8. vers. 12, 13, and part of the 14.

Say ye not a confederacy to all them to whom this people shal say a confederacy; neither fear ye [their fear] nor be afraid. V. 13. Sanctifie the Lord of hosts himself, and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread. V. 14. And he shall be for a Sanctuary.

CHAP. I.

Wherein the Text and Context are opened, the Doctrines propounded; and the general method stated.

THere is not more diversity found in the outward Features, than in the inward tempers and dispositions of men: Some are as timerous as Hares and start at every sound, or yelp of a Dog: Others are bold as Lions, and can face dangers without trembling. Some fear more than they

ought, and ſome before they ought, and others when they ought not at all. The carnal perſon fears Man, not God: The ſtrong Chriſtian fears God, not Man; the weak Chriſtian fears man too much, and God too little.

There is a Fear which is the effect of ſin, ſpringing from guilt, and hurrying the Soul into more guilt: and there is a fear which is the effect of Grace, ſpringing from our love to God and his Intereſt, and driving the Soul to God in the way of duty. The leſs fear any man hath, the more happineſs, except it be of that fear which is our happineſs and our excellency.

It cannot be ſaid of any man as it is ſaid of *Leviathan*, *Job.* 41. 33. That he is made without fear, thoſe that have moſt fortitude, are not without ſome fears: And when the Church is in the ſtorms of perſecution, and almoſt covered with the waves, the ſtouteſt paſſengers in it may ſuffer as much from this boiſterous paſſion within, as from the ſtorm without: and all for want of throughly believing, or not ſeaſonably remembring, *That* the Lord High Admiral of all the Ocean, and Commander of all the winds is on board the Ship, to ſteer and to preſerve it in the ſtorm.

A pregnant inſtance hereof is furniſhed to our hands in this Context, where you find the beſt men trembling in expectation of the worſt events both on the Church in general and themſelves in particular. *Their hearts were moved like the Trees of the Wood ſhaken with the Wind*, *Chap.* 3. *verſ.* 2.

And indeed if their dangers were to be meaſured

sured by sense only, their fears were not above the value of the cause, yea their dangers seemed to exceed their fears; for it was the invasion of a forraign and cruel enemy, even the *Assyrian* who were to break in upon them like a breach of the Sea, and overflow the land of *Immanuel*, *vers.* 7. *The Lord bringeth up upon them the waters of the River, strong and many: even the King of* Assyria, *and all his glory, and he shall come up over all his channels, and go over all his banks.* And as the 7. *vers.* resembles the enemy to waters, which quickly drown the Countrey into which they break, so the 8. *verse* tells you how far they should prevail, and how near it should come to a general and total ruine. *He shall pass through Judah, he shall overflow and go over, he shall reach even to the neck and the stretching out of his wings shall fill the breadeth of thy Land O* Immanuel. All the body should be under water, except the capital City, which remained above water.

Having thus described the power and success of the invading enemy, in the 9 and 10 *verses* he derides their plots and combinations, assuring them, that although God for just and holy ends would permit them for a time to afflict his people, yet in the issue, all their councels and cruelties should recoyl upon themselves, and end in their own ruine and confusion.

And thereupon *Isaiah* is commanded to encourage the feeble and trembling hearts of such as feared God in those distracted and frightful times, *v.* 11.12.13. *The Lord spake unto me with a strong*

a strong hand and instructed me, that I should not walk in the way of this people, saying, say ye not a confederacy, &c.

God speaking to the Prophet by a strong hand, imports the strong and mighty impression, that was made upon his heart by the Spirit of Prophecy: Wherein the Lord did as it were lay his hand upon him, as a man doth upon one to whom he is about to impart some special secret in a familiar way, *q. d.* Come hither *Isaiah*, (drawing him to him at the same instant with a friendly hand) take deep notice of what I am now to give thee in charge, both with respect to thy self, and my elect people that follow thee; say not you a confederacy to all them to whom this people shall say a confederacy, (*i. e.*) let not these frightful tidings work upon you, as they do upon *Ahaz*, and the common multitude with him, who are so terrified and scarred with the approaching dangers, that all their counsels, thoughts and studies are taken up in preventing it by making a confederacy, or league with the *Assyrian*; or if that cannot be, then with some Forraign power that may secure them against the *Assyrian*, but their eyes are not all to me for protection and deliverance, they expect more from *Egypt* than from Heaven; from a broken reed, than from the Rock of ages. Fear not you their fear; Their fear drives them from God to the first creature: it first distracts them, and then ensnares them.

Hos. 5. 13.

But on the contrary, see that thou, and all the faithful

faithful in the land with thee, do ſanctifie me in your hearts, and make me your fear, and your dread. (*i. e.*) relay upon me by faith in this day of trouble, and ſee that you give me the glory of my wiſdom, power and faithfulneſs; by relying intirely upon thoſe my attributes engaged for you in ſo many tried promiſes: And do not betake your ſelves to ſuch ſinful and vain ſhifts as thoſe do that have no intereſt in me, nor experience of me. This is the general ſcope and deſign of the Text; wherein more particularly you have,

1. An evil practice prohibited. 2. An effectual remedy preſcribed. 3. A ſingular encouragement to apply that remedy.

1. An evil practice prohibited, *Fear not their fear, neither be afraid.* This is that ſinful principle, which was but too apt to incline them to do as others did, *ſcil.* To ſay a confederacy. Sinful fears are apt to drive the beſt men into ſinful complyances, and indirect ſhifts to help themſelves.

Their fear may be underſtood two wayes;

1. Subjectively. 2. Effectively.

1. *Subjectively*, for the ſelf ſame fear wherewith the carnal and unbelieving *Jews* feared: a fear that enſlaved them in bondage of Spirit; a fear that is the fruit of ſin, a ſin in its own nature, the cauſe of much ſin to them, and a juſt puniſhment of God upon them for their other ſins.

2. *Effectively*, Let not your fear produce in you ſuch miſchievous effects as their fear doth;

to

to make you forget God, magnifie the creature, prefer your own wits and policies to the Almighty power, and unspotted faithfulness of God: if you say, but how shall we help it?

2. Why in the next place, you have an *Effectual remedy prescribed, But sanctifie the Lord of hosts himself, and let him be your fear and your dread.* The fear of God will swallow up the fear of Man, a reverential aw and dread of God will extinguish the slavish fear of the creature: as the Sun-shine puts out fire; or as one fire fetches out another: so will this fear fetch out that.

By sanctifying the Lord of Hosts himself, is meant a due ascription of the glory of his Soveraign power, wisdom and faithfulness, not only in verbal & professed acknowledgements thereof, but especially in those internal acts of affiance, resignation, & intire dependence on him, which as they are the choicest respects of the creature towards its God, and give him the greatest glory, so they are certainly the most beneficial and comfortable acts we can perform for our own peace and safety in times of danger.

If a man do really look to God in a day of trouble and fear, as to the *Lord of Hosts*, (*i. e.*) one that governs all the creatures, and all their actions: at whose beck and command all the Armies of Heaven and Earth are: and then can rely upon the care and love of this God, as a child in danger of trouble reposes on, and commits himself with greatest confidence to the care and protection of his father: O what peace, what

rest

reſt muſt neceſſarily follow upon this! Who would be afraid to paſs through the midſt of armed Troops and Regiments, whilſt he knows that the General of that Army is his own Father? The more power this filial fear of God obtains in your hearts, the leſs will you dread the power of the Creature. When the *Dictator* ruled at *Rome*, then all other *Officers* ceaſed, and ſo in a great meaſure will all other fears where the fear of God is *Dictator* in the heart. This is the Remedy.

3. And to enable us to apply this Remedy in the worſt and moſt difficult times, we have a ſingular *encouragement* propoſed. If we will thus ſanctifie the Lord of Hoſts himſelf, by ſuch an acknowledgement of, and child-like dependence on him in times of danger, then he will be to us for *a Sanctuary* (*i. e.*) he will ſurely protect, defend and provide for us in the worſt times and caſes, then will the Lord *Create upon every dwelling place of mount Zion and upon her Aſſemblies, a cloud and ſmoke by day, and the ſhining of a flaming fire by night; for upon all the glory ſhal be a defence, and there ſhall be a Tabernacle, for a ſhadow in the day time from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from the ſtorm, and from rain.* Let the winds roar, the rain beat, the lightnings flaſh, you are in ſafety, and have a good roof over your heads. Hence theſe two points of Doctrine offer themſelves.

Aſyli loco.

Præſtabit vos inacceſſos & inviolabiles ab his regibus

1. *Doctrine.*

1. *Doctrine.*

That the best men are too apt to be overcome with slavish fears in times of eminent distress and danger.

2. *Doctrine.*

That the fear of God is the most effectual means to extinguish the sinful fear of man, & to secure us from danger.

These two points take in the substance and scope of the Text, but because I design to treat in the following Chapters, of the *Kinds*, *Nature*, *Uses*, *Causes*, *Effects*, and *Remedies* of Fear. I shall not distinctly prosecute them, but proceed in this Order in the following Chapters.

CHAP. II.

Wherein the kinds and nature of Fear are opened, and particularly the distracting slavish Fear of Creatures.

SECT. I.

THere is a threefold Fear found in men, *viz.*

1. Natural
2. Sinful
3. Religious

} Fear.

1. Natural Fear, of which all are partakers that partake of the common nature, not one excepted.

Natural Fear is the trouble or perturbation of mind from the aprehension of approaching evil, or impending danger.

φέβομαι: *fugio per-*

The Greek word φόβος comes from a Verb, that signifies Flight; this

this is not always ſinful, but it is always the fruit & conſequent of ſin. Since ſin entred into our nature there is no ſhaking off Fear, no ſooner had *Adam* tranſgreſſed, but he feared and fled, hiding himſelf among the Trees of the Garden, *Gen.* 3. 8. when he had tranſgreſſed the Covenant, he preſently feared the execution of the Curſe. Firſt he *eats*, then he *hides*. And this afflictive paſſion is from him tranſmitted and derived to all his children.

fect med πέφοβα, ind φόβος timor, fuga

To this natural Fear, it pleaſed our Lord *Jeſus Chriſt* to ſubject himſelf in the days of his fleſh, he was afraid, yea, he was ſore amazed. *Mark.* 14. 33. For though his humane nature was abſolutely free from ſin, yet he came in the *likeneſs of ſinful fleſh*, *Rom.* 8. 3.

This fear creates great trouble and perturbation in the mind, 1 *John* 4. 18. *Fear hath torment*; in proportion to the danger is the fear, and in proportion to the fear, the trouble and diſtraction of the mind, if the fear be exceeding great, reaſon is diſplaced, and can conduct us no farther, as the *Pſalmiſt* ſpeaks of Mariners in a Storm, *they are at their wits end*, *Pſal.* 107. 27. or as it is varied in the *Margin*, all wiſdom is ſwallowed up, and this is the meaning of *Deut.* 28. 25. that they ſhould go out againſt their enemies one way, and *flee before them ſeven ways*, (*i. e.*) ſo great ſhall be the fright and diſtraction that they ſhall attempt now one way,

Rector in incerto eſt, nec quid fugiatve petatve, invenit. Ovid.

way, then another, striving every way, but liking none: for fear so far betrays the succours of Reason, that their counsels are always in uncertainty & at a loss, and the usual voice of a man in this condition is, *I know not what to do, I know not which way to turn.*

pavidi semper consilia in incerto.

Evil is the object of fear, and the greater the evil is, the stronger the fear must needs be, and therefore the terrours of an awakened and terrified Conscience must be allowed to be the greatest of terrours, because in that case a man hath to do with a great and terrible God, and is scarred with apprehensions of his infinite and eternal wrath: Than which no evil is or can be greater. You see at what height Christs conflict with it wrought, when it made him sweat as it were great clods of bloud. Of all temporal evils death is the greatest, and therefore *Job* calls it *the King of terrours*, Job 18. 14 Or the most terrible of terribles. *Thuanus* relates two strange instances of the fear of death, One of a certain Captain who was so terrified with the fear of death, that he poured out a kind of bloudy sweat from all parts of his body. Another, is of a young man condemned for a small matter by *Sixtus Quintus* who was so vehemently terrified with the fears of death, that he shed a kind of

Dux quidam in digon mortis metu adeo concussus fuit, ut sanguineum sudorem toto corpore fudit. Hist. lib. 11.

Juvenis oblevem causam à Sixto V damnatus, præ doloris ve-

of bloudy Teats. Theſe are ſtrange and terrible effects of Fear, but vaſtly ſhort of what Chriſt felt and ſuffered, who grapled with a far greater evil then the Terrors of death, even the wrath of an incenſed God, ponred out to the full, and that immediatly upon him.

hementia fertur lacrymas cruentes fudiſſe. Lib. 80.

But yet evil, as evil, is rather the object of hatred, than of fear, it muſt be an imminent or near approaching evil, which we ſee not how to eſcape or put by, that provokes fear, and rouzes this Lyon. And therefore the Saints in glory are perfectly freed from fear, becauſe they are out of the reach of all danger: Nor do we that are here in the midſt of evils, fear them till we ſee them approaching us, and we ſee not how to avoid them. To hear of Fire, Plague, or the Sword in the *Indies*, doth not affright us, becauſe the evil is ſo remote from us: It's far enough off, we are in no danger of it: but when it is in the Town, much more when within our own dwellings, we tremble. Evil hurts us not by a ſimple apprehenſion of its nature; but of its union: and all propinquity is a degree of union, as a learned Divine ſpeaks.

And its worth obſervation, that all carnal ſecurity is maintained by putting evils at a great diſtance from us. As it is noted of thoſe ſecure Senſualiſts *Amos* 6. 3. *They put far from them the evil day.* The meaning is not that they did, or could put the evil one minute farther from them in realiry, but only by imagination

Dr. *Reynolds.*

imagination and fancy, they shut their own eyes and would not see it, lest it should give an unpleasing interruption to their mirth; and this is the reason why death puts the living into no more fear, because it is apprehended as remote, and at an undetermined distance; whereas if the precise time of death were known, especially if that time were near, it would greatly scare and terrifie.

This is the nature of natural Fear, the infelicity of nature, which we all groan under the effects of. It is in all the creatures in some degree, but among them all, none suffer more by it, than man, for hereby he becomes his own tormentor; nor is any torment greater than this when it prevails in an high degree upon us. Indeed all constitutions and tempers admit not the same degrees of fear, some are naturally courageous and stout like the *Lyon* for magnanimity and fortitude, others exceeding timerous and faint-hearted like the *Hare* or *Hart*, one little dog will make an hundred of them fear and flee before him. *Luther* was a man of great courage and presence of mind in dangers, *Melanchon* very timerous and subject to dispondency: thus the difference betwixt them Is expressed in one of *Luther's* Letters to him, *I am well nigh a secure spectator of things, and esteem not any thing these fierce and threatning* Papists. *I much dislike those anxious cares, which as thou writest do almost consume thee. There might be as great a* flock of grace in one as in the other, but *Melanchons*

Epist ad Melanc. *An.* 1549.

Melanchthon's grace had not the advantage of so stout and couragious a temper of body and mind as *Luther's* had. Thus briefly of natural Fear.

SECT. II.

THere is a Fear which is formally and intrinsically sinful, not only our infelicity, but our faults, nor our simple affliction and burden, but our great evil and provocation; and such is the fear here dissuaded, called *Their Fear.* (*i. e.*) the fear wherewith carnal and unbelieving men do fear, when dangers threaten them; and the sinfulness of it lies in five things.

1. In the spring and cause of it, which is unbelief, and an unworthy distrust of God, when we dare not rely upon the security of a divine promise, nor trust to Gods protection in the way of our duty: This was the very case of that people, *Isaiah* 30. 15. *Thus saith the Lord, the holy one of Israel, in returning and rest shall ye be saved, in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength; and ye would not, but ye said no, for we will flee upon horses; therefore shall ye flee: And we will ride upon the swift; therefore shall they that pursue you be swift, one thousand shall flee at the rebuke of one,* &c.

Thus stood the case, *Sennacherib* with a mighty Host was ready to invade them, this puts them into a fright, in this distress God assures them by the mouth of the Prophet, *That in returning and rest they should be saved, in quietness and confidence should be their strength.* The meaning is, never perplex your selves with va-

rious

rious counsels and projects, to secure your selves under the wings of *Egypt*, or any other *Protector*, but with a composed, quiet, and calm temper of mind, rest upon my power by Faith, take my promises for your security, this shall be your salvation, and your strength, more effectual to your preservation, than Armies, Garisons, or any creature defence in the World; one act of Faith shall do you better service than *Pharaoh* and all his Forces can do.

But ye said no, *q. d.* we dare not trust to that, a good *Horse* will do us more service at such a time, than a good *Promise*; *Egypt* is a better security in their eye than *Heaven*. This is the fruit of gross infidelity. And as wicked men do thus forsake God, and cleave to the creature in time of trouble, so there is found a spice of this distrustfulness of God, producing fear and trouble in the best of men. It was in the Disciples themselves, *Matth.* 8. 26. *Why are ye fearful O ye of little Faith?* A Storm had befallen them at Sea, danger began to threaten them, and presently you find a storm within, their fears were more boisterous than the Winds, and had more need of calming than the Sea, and it was all from their unbelief, as Christ tells them, the less their Faith, the greater their Fear: If a man can but rely upon God in a Promise, so far as he is enabled to believe, so far he will reckon himself well secured. *Illyricus* in his Catalogue of the Witnesses relates this remarkable passage of one *Andreas Proles*, a godly aged Divine,

Illyr. *Cat. Test. lib.* 19.

Divine, who lived somewhat before *Luther*, and Taught many Points soundly, according to his light then, he was called to a *Synod* at *Millain*; and afterwards in the *Lateran*, where opposing a Proposition of the *Pope* about burdening the Church with a new Holiday, he was brought into much danger, and escaping very narrowly from *Rome*, he bought him a *Bow* and *Weapons*, but as he was riding, he began to bethink himself, That the cause was not *his* but *God's*, and not to be maintained with Sword and Bow, and if it were, yet what could such a decrepit old man do with Weapons? Upon which he threw away his Weapons, committed himself, his cause, and his journey to God, relyed upon his Promises more than Sword or Bow, and came home safe, and afterward died quietly in his bed.

2. The sinfulness of Fear lies in the excess and immoderacy of it, when we fear more than we ought; For it may be truly said of our Fears as the *Philosopher* speaks of Waters, *difficilé suis terminis continentur*, 'Tis hard to keep them within bounds, every Bush is a Bear, every petty trouble puts us into a fright, our Fear exceeds the value and merit of the cause. 'Tis a great sin to love or fear any creature above the rate of a creature, as if they were Masters of all our temporal and eternal comforts. Thus when the men of *Israel* heard of the confederacy and conjunction of their enemies against them, the Text saith, *Their hearts were moved, as the Trees of the wood are moved with the wind, Isa.* 7. 1. or as we use to say *proverbially*, like an *Aspine leaf*: 'tis

'tis a sad sight to behold men shaking and quivering as the Trees do in a windy day, yet thus did the house of *David*, partly through the remembrance of past calamities, but especially through incredulity in Gods protecting care in their present and future dangers; yea, this is too often the fault of good men in creature fear, as well as in creature love, to transgress the due bounds of moderation. 'Tis noted of *Jacob* though a man of much faith, and one that had the sweetest encouragements to strengthen it both from former experiences, and Gods gracious promises to be with him; yet when *Esau* was come nigh, he was *greatly afraid and distressed*, *Gen* 32. 7. It was but a little before that God had graciously apprared to him, and sent a Royal guard of Angels to attend him, even two hosts or armies of Angels, *Vers.* 1. 2. And yet assoon as *Esau* approached him, he was afraid, greatly afraid; yea greatly afraid and distressed, notwithstanding such an encouraging vision as this was.

3. The sinfulness of our Fears lies in the inordinacy of them: to fear it more then we ought is bad enough, but to magnifie its power above the power of a creature: to exalt the power of any creature by our fears, and give it such an Ascendent over us, as if it had an Arbitary and absolute dominion over us, or over our comforts, to do with them what it pleased; this is to put the creature out of its own Class and rank, into the place of God, and is therefore a very sinful and evil fear.

To

To *trust* in any creature as if it had the power of a God to *help* us, or to *fear* any creature, as if it had the power of a God to *hurt* us, is exceeding sinful, and highly provoking to God. This inordinate trust is taxed and condemned in *Isai.* 31. 3. They would needs go down to *Egypt* for help, and trust in their horses and horsemen, because they were strong (*i. e.*) in their opinion they were able to secure them against all those dangers the Prophet from the Lords own mouth had threatned them with, but to take them off from this sinful and inordinate dependence on the creature he tells them, *v.* 3. *Now the* Egyptians *are men and not God, and their horses flesh, and not spirit, when the Lord shall stretch forth his hand, both he that helpeth shall fall, and he that is holpen shall fall down; and they shall faill together,* q. d

'Tis a sinful and dangerous mistake for one creature to give that trust and dependence to another creature, which is due only to God, to look upon men as if they were Gods, and horses as if they were Spirits: All creatures, even the strongest, are but as the Hop, the Vine, or the Ivy, if they clasp about the pole, the wall, or the oak; they may be supported, as you also may by leaning upon God, but if they depend, and intangle themselves one upon another, as you and the *Egyptians* do, you shall fail, and fall all together.

And as one creature is apt inordinately and sinfully thus to trust and lean upon another; so there is as great a proneness in the creatures in-

ordinately to fear and dread each other, as if the creature feared were rather a God, than a man, rather a Spirit than flesh; and thus our fear magnifies and exalts the creature, and puts it as it were into the room and place of God. This was the sin which God rebuked in his own people *Isai* 51. 12. 13 *I even I am he that comforteth thee, who art thou, that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man which shall be made as grass, and forgettest the Lord thy maker*, &c. See how fear exalts man, and depresseth God, it thinks upon the noxious power of men so much, that it forgets the saving power of God, as if that stood for nothing; thus a mortal worm that shall perish as the grass, eclipses the glory of the great God, that stretched forth the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth.

And this was the evil against which Christ cautioned his own *Disciples* in *Matth.* 10. 28. *Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell* q. d. Have a care you never fear any man, be he armed with never so much power, and rage; as if the power, of making or marring you for ever were in his hands, as if you lay at the feet of his will and pleasure to be saved or ruined for ever. Fear not him that can only touch your bodies as if he would damn your souls, invest not any creature with the sovereign and incommunicable power of God.

4. The sinfulness of Fear consists in the distracting

tracting influence it hath upon the hearts of men, whereby it discomposeth and unfits them for the discharge of their duties.

Fear sometimes put men into such an hurry, and their thoughts into such disorder, that for the present they have scarce any succour or relief from their graces, or from their reason; for under an extraordinary fear both grace and reason like the wheels of a watch wound above its due height, stand still, and have no motion at all. It is rare to find a man of that largeness and constancy of heart and mind in a day of fear, that was found in *Jehoshaphat* 2 *Chro.* 20 2, 3. *Then there came some that told* Jehoshaphat *saying, there cometh a great multitude against thee from beyond the sea, on this side* Syria, *and behold they be in* Hazazon Tamar *which is* Engedi, *and* Jehoshaphat *feared, and set himself to seek the Lord.* He set himself (*i. e.*) he composed and fixed his heart for Prayer in the time of so great a fright, and terrible an Alarm: But it is rare to find such constancy and evenness of mind as this; in like cases it is with most in great frights, as the *Prophet* describes the condition of the Jews, *Isaiah* 22. 2, 3 When the City of *Jerusalem* was besieged and the enemy came under the walls of it, that which a little before was the *joyous City*, or as some read, the revelling City, is now in such a panick fear, that it is full of stirs and tumults, some run up to the tops of the houses either to hide or bewail themselves, or take a view of the dreadful enemy without: others prevent the sword of the enemy, and die by fear

before hand, their own apprehensions of misery killed them before the sword of any other enemy once touched them, but you read of none that ran into their closets to seek the Lord: the City was full of stirrs, but not of prayers: alas, Fear made them cry to the mountains, rather than to God, *ver.* 5. The best men find it hard to keep their thoughts from wandering and their minds from distraction in the greatest calm of peace, but a thousand times harder in the hurries and tumults of fear.

5. The sinfulness of Fear consists in the power it hath to dispose and incline men to the use of sinful means to put by their danger, and to cast them into the hands and power of temptation. *The fear of men bringeth a snare, Prov.* 29. 25. or puts and lays a snare before him: Satan spreads the net, and Fear like the stalking horse drives men right into it. It was fear which drew *Abraham* that great believer into the snare of dissimulation, to the great disparagement of Religion, for it was somewhat an odd sight to see *Abimelech* an heathen so schooling an *Abraham* for it, as he did *Gen.* 20. 9 And for the same evil you find God chiding his people in *Isa.* 57. 11. *And of whom hast thou been afraid, or feared that thou hast lied, and hast not remembred me?* There is a double lie occasioned by Fear, one in *words*, another in *deeds*: Hypocrisie is a lie done, a practical lie, and our Church History abounds with sad examples of dissimulation through fear: 'tis Satans great engine to make his Temptations victorious and successful with men.

SECT.

SECT. III.

THere is an Holy and laudable Fear, a Fear which is our *Treasure*, not our *Torment*, the chief Ornament of the Soul, its beauty and perfection, not its infelicity or sin, *viz.* the awful filial fear of God: natural fear is a pure or simple passion of the Soul: Sinful fear is the disordered and corrupt passion of the Soul: but this is the natural passion sanctified, and thereby changed and baptized into the name and nature of a Spiritual grace. This fear is also mentiõed in my Text, and prescribed as an Antidote against sinful fears: it devours carnal fears as *Moses* serpent did those of the *Enchanters*. It's one of the sorest judgments to be in the fear of men day & night, *Deut.* 28. 65. 66. 67. And one of the sweetest mercies to be in the fear of God all the day long, *Prov.* 23. 17. The fear of men shortens our days, *Isaiah* 22. 34 but the fear of the Lord prolongeth our days, *Prov.* 10. 27. The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life *Prov.* 14. 27. But the fear of man a fountain of mischiefs and miseries. By the fear of the Lord men depart from evil, *Prov.* 16. 6. But by the fear of man men run themselves into evil. *Prov.* 29. 25.

This Fear is *a gracious habit or principle planted by God in the soul, whereby the soul is kept under an holy awe of the eye of God, and from thence is inclined to perform, and do what pleaseth him, and to shun and avoid whatsoever he forbids and hates.*

1. It is planted in the soul as a permanent and fixed habit, it is not of the natural growth and production of mans heart, but o supernatural infusion and implantation. *Jer.* 32. 40. *I will put my fear into their inward parts.* To fear man is natural, but to fear God is wholly supernatural.

2 This gracious fear puts the soul under the awe of Gods eye, *Psal.* 119. 161. *My heart standeth in awe of thy word.* 'Tis the reproach of the servants of men to be *eye servants*, but it is the praise and honour of Gods servants to be so.

3. This respect to the eye of God inclines them to perform and do whatsoever pleaseth him, and is commanded by him; hence fearing God, and working righteousness are connected and linked together, *Acts* 10. 35. If we truly fear God, we dare not but do the things he commands, and if his fear be exalted in our hearts to an high degree, it will enable us to obey him in duties accompanied with deepest self denial, *Gen.* 22. 12. *Now I know thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me.*

4. This fear ingageth, and in some degree inableth the soul, in which it is to shun and avoid whatsoever is displeasing to God, and forbidden by him, in this *Job* discovered himself a true fearer of God, he would not touch what God had forbidden, and therefore was honoured with this Excellent Character, *He was one that feared God and eschewed evil, Job* 1. 3.

And thus of the several kinds of Fear.

CHAP.

CHAP III.

Shewing the various uses of Fear, both Natural, Sinful, and Religious, in the Government of the world by providence.

SECT. I.

HAving taken a brief view of the severl kinds and sorts of Fear that are found among men, our next work will be to open the Uses of them in the Government of this world, for one way or other they all subserve the most wise and holy purposes of God therein. And we will first enquire into.

1. *The Use of Natural Fear.*

Which if we will consider, it will be found exceeding necessary and useful to make man a governable creature by Law, and consequently the order comfort and tranquillity of the world necessarily depends upon it. How immbrigerous and intractable would the corruptions of mans nature make him, and uncapable of any moral restraint from the most flagitious and barbarous crimes had not God planted such a passion as this in his nature, which like a * bridle crubs in the corrupt propensions thereof. If fear did not clap its manacles and fetters upon the wild and boysterous lusts of men, they would certainly bear down all milder motives and break loose from all ingenuous bands

* *Est timor instar fræni quo equus regitur, hic metus si tolleretur, omnia conciderent.* Lavat. in pro. 29. vers. 25.

with disorders, ders, and

Intellectualis creatura eo ipso quod creatura est, superiorem habit, cujus providentiæ & ordinationi subjaceat · & qua intellectualis est capax est gubernationis moralis, qua dirigatur ad bonum, & arceatur à malo, & talis lex est illi simpliciter necessaria, ut convenienter suæ naturæ vivere possit. Suarez de lig. lib 1. cap. 3.

of restraint, the world would inevitably be filled tumults, rapines, theft, murall manner of uncleanness, and unrighteousness, *nec hospes ab hospite tutus*, men would become like the fishes of the sea, as the Prophet complains, *Hab.* 1. 14. where the greater swallow up a multitude of the smaller fry alive at one gulp; propriety could not be maintained in the world, no mans person could be safe or involate; power and opportunity to do mischief would measure out to men their Lot and inheritance, and consequently all Societies must disband and break up. We say, and the observation is sure, he that fears not his own, may easily be master of another mans life. 'Tis law, and fear of punishment that keeps the World in order; men are afraid to do evil, because they are afraid to suffer it, they see the Law hath inseparably linked penal and moral evils together, if they will presume upon the one, they must necessarily pull the other upon them too; and this keeps them in some order, and decorum; there would be no order or security without Law; but if Laws had no annexed

nexed penalties to inforce them and give them their Sanction as good there were no Laws; they would have no more power to restrain the corruptions of mens hearts, than the new cords or green withs had to bind *Samson*; And yet if the severest penalties in the world, were annexed to, or appointed by the Law, they could signifie nothing to the ends of Government without Fear. This is that tender sensible power or passion on which threatnings work, and so brings men under moral government and restraint, *Rom.* 13. 3. 4. *Magistrates are a terror to evil works; wilt thou not then be afraid of the power? but if thou do that which is evil, be afraid, for he beareth not the sword in vain.* And by this means a world of evil is restrained and prevented in the world.

It was the custom and policy of the *Persians*, (I cannot say laudable) at the death of their Kings to give every man liberty for the space of five days to do what he would, and such mischiefs were done every where by the unbridled lusts of men in those days, that it made the people long and pray for the instalment of their next King, it exceedingly endeared Government to them: Blessed be God for Law and Government, for curbing by this means the raging lusts of the hearts of men, and procuring rest and comfort for us in the world this way.

2. *The use of sinful Fear.*

This is formally evil and sinful in its own nature, as well as the fruit of sin, and offspring of sinful nature, yet the Lord knows how to overrule it in his providential Government of the

world to his own wiſe and holy purpoſes, and he doth ſo;

Firſt, by making it his ſcourge to puniſh his enemies. If men will not fear *God*, they ſhall fear *men*, yea, they ſhall be made a terrour to *themſelves*. And indeed it is a dreadful puniſhment for God to deliver a man up into the hands of his own fears: I think there is ſcarce a greater torment to be found in the World, than for a man to be his own *Tormenter*, and his mind made a Rack, an Engine of torture, to his Body, we read in 2 *Kings* 17 25 that God ſent Lyons among the people, but certainly that is not ſo bad as for God to let looſe our own Fears upon us. No Lyon is ſo cruel as this paſſion, and therefore *David* eſteemed it ſo great a deliverance to be delivered from all his fears, *Pſal.* 34. 4. It is a dreadful threatning which is recorded in *Deut.* 28 65. 66. 67. Againſt the diſobedient and rebellious, *Thou ſhalt find no eaſe, neither ſhall the ſole of thy foot have reſt, but the Lord ſhall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and ſorrow of mind, and thy life ſhall hang in doubt before thee, and thou ſhalt fear day and night, and ſhalt have no aſſurance of thy life; in the morning thou ſhalt ſay would God it were Even, and at Even thou ſhalt ſay would God it were morning, for the fear of thine heart wherewith thou ſhalt fear, and for the ſight of thine eyes which thou ſhalt ſee.* When fear hath once ſeized the heart, you may ſee deaths colours diſplayed in the face. What a diſmal life do they live, who have neither any peace by day, nor reſt by night,

night, but wearisom days and nights are appointed to them. The days of such men are tiresome days, they wish for the night hoping it may give them a little rest, but their fears go to bed with them, their hearts pant, and meditate terrour, and then, O that it were day again.

2. By Fear God punisheth his enemies hell: It is that *flagellum Dei*, terrible scourge of God, by which a great part of the torment of the damned is inflicted on them. Divines use to make this tripartite distinction of hell torments, and tells us God punishes the wicked there partly by remembrance what is past, *viz* the mercies and means they once had, but are there irrecoverably lost, partly by the sense of things present, even the wrath of God overlaying soul and body, and partly by the fear of what is to come; and sure this is not the least part of the misery of those wretched cast-aways:

O that fearful expectation of fiery indignation! more and more of Gods wrath still coming on as the waves of the Sea, thrusting forward one another: Yea, this is that which makes the Devils tremble, *James* 2. 19 φρίσσουσι the word signifies such a noise as the rore of the sea to, the roaring of the waves when they break themselves against the rocks, and this is occasioned by the fears which are continually held as a whip over them.

Calamitosus est animus futuri anxius, & ante miserias miser. Senec.

3. Providence makes use of the slavish fears & terrors wicked of men to dissipate and scatter them.

when they are combined & confederated against the people of God; by these have they been routed and put to flight when there hath been no other visible power to do it: It's said, *Psal.* 78. 55. God cast out the Heathen before his people *Israel*; and by what means were those mighty Nations subdued? not by the strength or multitudes of the *Israelites*, but by their own fears; for its said, *Joshuah* 24. 11. 12. *The Lord sent the hornet before them, which drave them out.* These *Hornets* were the fears and terrors of their own guilty and presaging minds, which buzzed & smarmed in their own breasts, and stung them to the heart, worse than the swords the *Israelites* could do. *Theodoret* relates a memorable story of *Sapores* King of *Persia* who had besieged many Christians in the City *Nisibis*, and put them to great straits, so that little hopes of safety were left them, but in the depth of their distress God sent an Army of Hornets and Gnats among their enemies, which got into the trunks of their Elephants and ears and nostrils of their Horses which so enraged them, that they brake their harness, cast their Riders, and put them all to the rout; by which providence the Christians escaped. These *Hornets*

Crabrones per metaphoram repentinum terrorem significant, qui in animos malè sibi conscios a Deo immissus fuit. Layater in loc.

Sapores *Rex Persarum cum urbem* Nisib *in qua erant Christiani, obsedisset eam que afflige-ret, magna vis Crabronum, & Culicum re-*

nets were terrible to them, but Fears which are *Hornets* in a figure, are ten thouſand times more terrible; they will quell and ſink the very hearts of the ſtouteſt men, yea, they will quickly make thoſe, that in their pride & haughtineſs took themſelves rather to be Gods and almighty Powers, to know themſelves to be but men, as it is, *Pſal.* 9. 20. *Put them in fear O Lord, that they may know themſelves to be but men*: One fright will ſcare them out of a thouſand fond conceits and idle dreams.

pentè venit, & in Promuſcides cavas Elephantorum conſedit, complevitque aures Equorum, ita ut ſeſſores excuſſerint, & turbatos ordines in fugam converterint. Hiſt. lib. 2. Cap. 30.

3. *The uſe of Religious Fear.*

If God can make ſuch fruit to grow upon ſuch a bramble as the ſinful ſlaviſh fear of man is, what may we expect from Religious Fear, a choice root of his own ſpirits planting? The uſes and benefits hereof are innumerable, and ineſtimable, but I muſt contract and will only inſtance in three ſpecial uſes of it.

1. By this Fear the people of God are excited to, and confirmed in the way of their duty. *Eccleſ.* 12. 13. *Fear God, and keep his commandments.* It is *Cuſtos utriuſque Tabulæ*, the keeper of both Tables; becauſe the duties of both Tables are influenced by it. 'Tis this Fear of God that makes us have a due reſpect to all his commands, and it is as powerful to confirm us in, as

as it is to excite us to our duties, *Jer.* 32. 40. *I will put my fear into their inwards, and they ſhall not depart from me.* Look as he that ſoweth doth not regard the winds, but goes on in his labour whatever weather the face of Heaven threatens; ſo he that fears God will be found in the way of his duty, let the aſpect of the times be never ſo lowring and diſcourageing; and truly, this is no ſmall advantage in times of frights and diſtractions. Slaviſh fear ſets a man upon the Devils ground, Religious fear upon Gods ground; and how vaſt an odds is there in the choice of our ground, when we are to endure a great fight of affliction.

2. Another excellent uſe of this Fear, is to preſerve the purity and peace of our Conſciences, by preventing guilt, and grief therein, *Prov* 16. 6. *The fear of the Lord is to depart from evil.* See how it kept *Joſeph*, *Gen.* 39. 9. and *Nehemiah*, *chap.* 5. 15. And this benefit is invaluable, eſpecially in a day of outward calamity and diſtreſs; look in what degree the fear of God prevails in our hearts, anſwerable thereunto will the ſerenity, peace, and quietneſs of our Conſciences be; and proportionable unto that will our ſtrength and comfort be in the evil day, and our courage and confidence to look dangers in the face.

3. To conclude, A principal uſe of this fear of God is to awaken us to make timely proviſions for future diſtreſſes, that whenſoever they come, they may not come by way of ſurprize upon us. Thus *Noah*, being moved with fear, pre-

pared

prepared an Ark, *Heb.* 11. 7. It was the inſtrument of his and his Families ſalvation. Some men owe their death to their fears, but good men in a ſenſe owe their lives to their fears; ſinful fears have ſlain ſome, and godly fears have ſaved others. *A wiſe man feareth, and departeth from evil,* (ſaith Solomon) *but a fool rageth and is confident.* His fears give him a timely Alarm before the enemy fall into his quarters and beat them up, by this means he hath time to get into his chambers of ſecurity and reſt, before the ſtorm fall, but the fool rageth and is confident, he never fears till he begin to feel, yea, moſt times he is paſt all hope, before he begin to have any fears.

Theſe are ſome of the uſes God makes of the ſeveral kinds of Fear.

CHAP. IV.

Wherein the ſprings and cauſes of Sinful Fear are ſearched out, and the evil of ſuch fears thence diſcovered.

SECT I.

HAving ſhewn before the *Kinds* and uſes of Fear, it remains that next we ſearch out the ſprings from which theſe waters of *Marah* are derived, and fed And,

1. *Cauſe.*

Firſt, we ſhall find the ſinful fears of moſt good men to ſpring out of their ignorance, and the darkneſs of their own minds. All darkneſs diſpoſes

diſpoſes to fear, but none like intellectual darkneſs, you read, *Cant* 3. 8. how *Solomon*'s Lifeguard had every man his ſword upon his thigh, *becauſe of fear in the night:* The night is the frightful ſeaſon in the dark, every *bush* is a *bear*, we ſometimes ſmile by day, to ſee what ſilly things thoſe were that ſcared us in the night; ſo it is here, were our judgment but duly informed, how ſoon would our hearts be quieted?

Now there is a five fold Ignorance out of which our fears are generated.

1. Ignorance of God, either we know not, or at leaſt, duly conſider not his Almighty power, vigilant care, unſpotted faithfulneſs, and how they are all engaged by Covenant for his people: This ignorance and inconſiderateneſs lay at the root of their fears, *Iſai.* 40. 27. 28. my way (ſaith Sion) *is hid from the Lord, and my judgment paſſed over from my God*, words imparting a ſuſpicion that God had left her out of the account of his providence, and the Catalogue of thoſe whom he would look after & take care for.

But were it once throughly underſtood and believed what power there is in Gods hand to defend us, what tenderneſs in his bowels to commiſerate us, what faithfulneſs in all the promiſes in which they are made over to us, O how quiet and calm would our hearts be! Our courage would quickly up, and our fears down.

2. Our ignorance of men generates our fears of men, we fear them, becauſe we do not know them, if we underſtood them better, we would fear them leſs, we over-value them, and then fright

fright at them: They ſay the Lion is painted more fierce than he is, I am ſure our fancy paints out man more dreadful than indeed he is. If wicked men, eſpecially if multitudes of wicked men be confederated againſt us, our hearts quail, and preſently apprehend inevitable ruine. *The floods of the ungoodly made me afraid*, ſaith *David* (*i. e.*) the multitudes of them, which he thought like a flood or mighty torrent of waters muſt needs ſweep away ſuch a ſtraw, ſuch a feather as he was before them; but mean time we know or conſider not that they have no power againſt us, but what is given them from above, and that It's uſeual with God to cramp their hands, and clap on the bands of reſtraint upon them, when their hearts are fully ſet in them to do miſchief, did we ſee & conſider them as they are in the hand of our God, we ſhould not tremble at them as we do.

3. Ignorance of *our ſelves*, and *Iſai.* 51. 12. the relations we have to God, creates ſlaviſh fears in our hearts. For did belivers but throughly underſtand how dear they are to God, what relations they ſuſtain to him, of what acount and value they are in his eyes, and how well they are ſecured by his faithful promiſes and gracious preſence, they would not ſtart and tremble at every noiſe, and appearance of danger as they do. God reckoned it enought to cure *Abraham's* ſinful fears when he told him how his God ſtood engaged for his defence, *Gen.* 15. 1. *Fear not* Abraham, *I am thy ſhield.*

And noble *Nehemiah* valued himſelf in times of

of danger and fear by his interest in God, as his words import, *Nehem.* 6 11. the conspiracy against him was strong, the danger he and the faithful with him at that time were in, was extraordinary, some therefore advised to flee to the *Temple*, and Barracado themselves there against the Enemy, but *Nehemiah* understood himself better, *Should such a man as I flee? And who being as I am, would flee?* saith he, *q. d.* a man so called of God to this service, a man under such promises, a man of such manifold and manifest experiences; should such a man flee? Let others who have no such encouragements flee if they will, for my part I will not flee. I remember it was an argument used by *Tertullian* to quiet the fears, and stay the flight of Christians in those bloody times; Art thou afraid of a man, O Christian, when devils are afraid of thee, as a *Prisoner* is of his Judge, and whom the whole world ought to fear, as being one that shall judge the world: O that we could without pride and vanity but value our selves duly, according to our Christian dignities, and priviledges, which if ever it be necessary to count over and value, it is in such times of danger and fear, when the heart is so prone to dejection and sinking fears.

Tertul. *de fuga.*
Times hominem Christiane, quem timeri oportet an Angelis, Siquidem Angelos judicaturus es: quem timeri oportet à Demoniis siquidem & in Demonis, accepisti potestantem: quem timeri oportet ab universo mundo, siquidem & in te mundus judicatur.

4. Ignor-

4. Ignorance of our dangers and troubles cauſes our frights & terrours, we miſtake them, and therefore fright at them; we are Ignorant of two things in our troubles among others. *viz.*

1. The comforts that are in them.
2. The outlets and eſcapes from them.

There is a vaſt odds betwixt the outward appearance and face of trouble and the inſide of it; 'tis a Lion to the eye at a diſtance, but open it, and there is honey in its belly. *Paul* and *Silas* met that in a priſon that made them ſing at midnight, and ſo have many more ſince their day.

And as we are ignorant of the comforts that are ſometimes found in our troubles, ſo of the outlets and doors of eſcape God can, and often doth open out of trouble; *To God the Lord belong the iſſues from death*, *Pſal.* 68 20. *he knoweth how to deliver the Godly out of temptation*, 2 *Pet.* 2 9. he can with every temptation make a way to eſcape, 1 *Cor*, 10. 13. the poor captive exil caſt upon nothing but dying in the pit, making their graves in the land of their captivity, *Iſai.* 51. 14. For they could think upon none but the uſual methods of deliverance, power, or price, and they had neither; little did they dream of ſuch immediate influences of God upon the Kings heart, to make him diſmiſs them freely contrary to all rules of State policy, *Iſai.* 45. 13.

5. But eſpecially the fears of good men ariſe out of their ignorance and inconſiderateneſs of the *Covenant of Grace.* If we were better acquainted with the nature, extent, and ſtability of the

the Covenant, our hearts would be much freed thereby from thoſe tormenting paſſions, this Covenant would be a *Penacea*, a univerſal remedy againſt all our fears, upon ſpiritual or temporal accounts, as will be made evident hereafter in this diſcourſe.

2. *Cauſe.*

2. Another cauſe and fountain of Sinful Fear, is guilt upon the Conſcience: A ſervant of ſin cannot but firſt or laſt be a ſlave of Fear, and they that have done evil, cannot chuſe but expect evil, no ſooner had *Adam* defiled and wounded his Conſcience with guilt, but he preſently trembles and hides himſelf, ſo it is with his children, God calls to him not in a threatning, but gentle dialect, not in a tempeſt, but in the cool of the day, yet it terrifies him, there being in himſelf *mens conſcia facti*, a guilty and condemning Conſcience, *Gen.* 3. 8. 'Tis *Seneca's* obſervation, That a guilty Conſcience is a terrible whip & torment to the Sinner, perpetually laſhing him with ſolicitous thoughts and fears, that he knows not where to be ſecure, nor dare he truſt to any promiſes of protection, but diſtruſts all, doubts and jealouzeth all; of ſuch it is ſaid, *Job* 15. 21. That *a dreadful ſound is in their ears*, noting not only the effects of real, but alſo of imaginary dangers, his own preſag-

Malè facinorum conſcientia flagellari, & plurimum illi tormentorum eſſe, eo quod perpetuo illam ſolicitudo urget, ac verberat quod ſponſoribus ſecuritatis ſuæ non poteſt credere. Senec. Epiſt. 97.

perſaging mind and troubled fancy ſcares him where no real danger is, ſuitable to that *Pro.* 28. 1. *The wicked fleeth when none purſues, but the righteous is bold as a Lion*, juſt as they ſay of ſheep, that they are affrighted by the clattering of their own feet, when once they are ſet a running: ſo is the guilty Sinner with the noiſe of his own Conſcience which ſounds nothing in his ears, but miſery, wrath, and hell: we may ſay of all wicked men in their frights as *Tacitus* doth of *Tyrants* and if it were poſſible to open their inſide, their mind, and conſcience, many terrible ſtripes and wounds would be found there; and it's ſaid, *Iſai.* 33. 14. The ſinners in *Sion* are afraid trembling taketh hold on the hypocrites fear: and trembling as naturally ariſeth out of guilt, as the ſparks do out of a fiery charcoal, Hiſtories abundantly furniſh us with ſad examples of the truth of this obſervation. *Catiline* that monſter of wickedneſs would ſtart at any ſudden noiſe, being haunted with the furies of his own evil conſcience. *Charles* the IX after his bloody and barbarous Maſſacre of the Proteſtants, could neither ſleep nor wake without muſick to divert his thoughts. And our *Richard* the Third after the murther of his two innocent Nephews, ſaw divers images or ſhapes like Devils in his ſleep, pulling and haling him. Mr. *Ward* tells of a *Jeſuit* in *Lancaſhire* who being followed by one that had found his Glove, out of on other deſign but

Si recludantur mentes Tyrannorum poſſe aſpici laniatus & ictus. Annal.

but to reſtore it to him, but being purſued by his own guilty Conſcience alſo, he leaped over the next hedge and was drowned. And remarkable is that which Mr. Fox relates of *Cardinal Creſentius* who fancied the devil walking in his chamber, and ſometimes couching under his Table as he was writing Letters to *Rome* againſt the Proteſtants. *Impius tantum metuit, quantum nocuit*, ſo much miſchief as Conſcience tells them they have done, ſo much it bids them expect. *Wolfius* tells us of one *John Hofmeiſter* who fell ſick with the very terrours of his own Conſcience in his Inn, as he was travelling towards *Auſpurge* in *Germany*, and was frighted by his own Conſcience to that degree that they were fain to bind him in his bed with chains, & all that they could get from him was, I am caſt away for ever, I have grievouſly wounded my own Conſcience.

To this wounded and trembling conſcience is oppoſed *the ſpirit of a ſound mind*, mentioned 2 *Tim.* 1 7. *God hath not given us the ſpirit of fear, but of power, of love, and of a ſound mind*; A ſound mind, is in this place the ſame thing with a pure and peaceable Conſcience, a mind or Conſcience not infirmed or wounded with guilt, as we ſay a ſound or heal body which hath no diſeaſe to infirm it, ſuch a mind is oppoſed to the ſpirit of fear; it will make a man bold as a Lion: *Nil conſcire tibi, nullâ Paliescere culpâ, hic murus aheneus eſto*.....

An evil and guilty Conſcience foments fears and terrours three ways.

1. By aggravating ſmall matters and blowing them

them up to the height of the most fatal and destructive evils; so it was with *Cain*, *Gen* 4. 14. *Every one that meets me will slay me.* Now every child was a *Giant* in his eye, and any body he met, his over match. A guilty Conscience gives a man no sight of his enemy, but through a magnifying or a multiplying glass.

2. It begets Fears, by interpreting all doubtful cases in the worst sense that can be fastened upon them; *Pessimus in dubiis Augur timor.* If the *Swallows* do but chatter in the chimney, *Bessus* interprets it to be a discovery of his crime, that they are telling tales of him, and saying, *Bessus* killed a man. Nay,

3 If a guilty Conscience have nothing to aggravate, and magnifie, nor any doubtful matter to interpret in a frightful sense, it can and often doth create fears and terrors out of nothing at all: the rules of Fear are not like the rules in *Arithmetick* where many nothings make nothing, but fear can make something out of nothing, yea, many things and great things out of nothing at all. *Psal* 53.5. *There were they in great fear where no fear was*; here was a great fear raised or created out of nothing at all: had their fear been examined, and hunted home to its original, it would have been found a pure creature of fancy, a *Chimæra* having no *fundamentum in re*, no other foundation but a troubled fancy, and a guilty Conscience: thus it

in metu & periculo plura & majora videntur metuentibus, cum creduntur facilius, tum finguntur impunius. Cicero.

was

was with *Pashur*, he was a very wicked man, and a bitter enemy to the *Prophet Jeremy*, and if there be none to fright and terrifie from abroad, rather that he shall want it, he shall be a terror to himself, *Jer.* 20. 3. 4. he was his own bugbear, afraid of his own shadow; and truly this is a great plague and misery, he that is a terror to himself, can no more flee from terrors than he can flee from himself. *O* the efficacy of Conscience! how doth it arrest the stoutest sinners, and make them tremble, when there is no visible external cause of fear! *Nemo, se judice, nocens absolvitur.*

1. *Object.* But may not a good man whose sins are pardoned be affrighted with his own fancies, and scared with his own imaginations?

Sol. No doubt he may, for there is a twofold fountain of fears, one in the body, another in the soul, one in the constitution, another in the conscience; It is the affliction and infelicity of many pardoned and gracious souls to be united and married to such distempered and ill habited bodies as shall afflict them without any real cause from within, and wound them by their own diseases and distempers, and these wounds can no more be prevented or cured by their Reason or Religion, than any other bodily disease suppose an Ague or a Feaver can be so cured. Thus Physicians tells us when adust choler and melancholy overflows, and abounds in the body, as in the Hypocondriacal distemper, *&c.* what sad effects

Fernel Pathiol. *lib.* 2. *c.* 16 *Corporis ha-*

fects it hath upon the mind as well as upon the body, there is not only a ſad and fearful aſpect or countenance without, but ſorrow fear & afflicting thoughts within; this is a ſore affliction to many good men whoſe Conſciences are ſprinkled with the blood of Chriſt from guilt, but yet Gods ſees good to clog them with ſuch afflictions as this for their humiliation, and for the prevention of worſe evils.

bitus ſuccus & macilentus, aſpectus inconſtans, horridus ac mæſtus, in morbis animi metus & mæſtitia, taciturnitas, ſolitudo inanis rerum commentatio ſomnus turbulentus horrendis in ſomniis fluctuans, & agitatus ſpectris rerum nigrarum &c.

2. *Object.* But many bold and daring ſinners are found, who notwithſtanding all the guilt with which their Conſciences are loaded, can look dangers in the face without trembling, yea, they can look death it ſelf the King of terrors in the face, with leſs fear than better men.

Sol. True, but the reaſon of that is from a ſpiritual judgement of God upon their hearts & conſciences, whereby they are hardened, and ſcared as with an hot Iron, 2. *Tim.* 4 2. and ſo Conſcience is diſabled for the preſent, to do its office, it cannot put forth its efficacy and activity now, when it might be uſeful to their ſalvation, but it will do it to purpoſe hereafter when their caſe ſhall be remedileſs.

3. *Cauſe.*

3. We ſee what a ſurge of Fears a guilty Conſcience is, and no leſs is the ſin of *unbelief*,

the real and proper cause of most distracting and afflictive Fears; so much as our Souls are empty of *Faith*, they are in times of trouble filled with *Fear*: We read of some that have died by no other hand, but their own Fears; but we never read of any that dyed by Fear, who were once brought to live by Faith: If men would but dig to the root of their Fears, they should certainly find unbelief there, *Matth.* 8. 26. *Why are ye fearful, O ye of little Faith?* The less Faith still the more Fear: Fear is generated by Unbelief, and Unbelief strengthened by Fear, as in nature there is an observable κυκολογένησις circular generation, vapours beget showers, and showers new vapours: so it is in things moral, and therefore all the skill in the world can never cure us of the disease of Fear, till God first cure us of our unbelief. Christ therefore took the right method, to rid the Disciples of their Fear, by rebuking their unbelief. The remains of this sin in Gods own people is the cause and fountain of their Fears, and more particularly to shew how Fear is generated by Unbelief, let a few particulars be heedfully adverted.

1. Unbelief weakens and stumbles the assenting act of Faith, and thereby cuts off from the soul in a great measure its principal Relief against dangers and troubles. It is the use and office Faith, to reallize to the Soul the invisible things of the world to come, and thereby encourage it against the fears and dangers of the present World: Thus *Moses forsook Egypt, not fearing*

the

the wrath of the King, for he endured, as seeing him that is invisible, Heb. 11. 27 If this assenting act of Faith be weakened or staggerred in the soul, if our invisibles seem uncertainties, and visibles the only realities, no winder we are so scarred and frighted when these visible and sensible comforts are exposed and endangered, as they often are, and will be in this mutable world. That man must needs be afraid to stand his ground, that is not throughly perswaded the ground he stands on is firm and good; 'tis not to be wondred that men should tremble, who seem to feel the ground shake and reel under them.

2. Unbelief shuts up the Refuges of the Soul in the Divine Promises, and by leaving it without those Refuges, must needs leave it in the hands of fears and terrors. That which fortifies and emboldens a Christian in evil times, is his dependence upon God for protection, *Psal.* 143 9. *I flee unto thee to hide me.* The cutting off of this Retreat (which nothing but unbelief can do) deprives the soul of all those succours and supports which the promises afford, and consequently fills the heart with anxiety and fear. *multa fidem promissa levant.*

3. Unbelief makes men negligent and careless in providing for troubles before they come, and so brings them by way of surprize upon them, and the more surprizing any evil is, the more frightful it is always found to be; We cannot think that *Noah* was so afrighted at the Flood when it began to swell above all the hills and

mountains, as all the rest of the World was, nor was there any reason that he should, having foreseen it by Faith, and made provision for it, *Heb.* 11. 7. *By Faith* Noah *being warned of God, prepared an Ark.* *Augustine* relates a very pertinent and memorable story of *Paulinus* Bishop of *Nola*, who was a very rich man both in goods and grace he had much of the world in his hands, but little of it in his heart, and it was well there was not; for the *Goths* are a barbarous people breaking into that City, like so many Devils fell upon the prey, those that trusted to the Treasures which they had, were deceived and ruined by them; for the Rich were put to Tortures to confess where they had, hid their moneys: This good *Bishop* fell into their hands and lost all he had, but was scarce moved at the loss, as appears by his Prayer which my *Author* relates thus, *Lord let me not be troubled for my gold and silver, thou knowest it is not my Treasure, that I have laid up in Heaven, according to thy command. I was warned of this judgment before it came, and provided for it, and where all my Interest lies. Lord thou knowest.*

Augustus, *decivit. Dei. lib.* 1. *c.* 10.

Thus Mr. *Bradford*, when the *Keepers* Wife came running into his Chamber suddenly, with words able to have put the most men in the world into a trembling posture, O Mr. *Bradford*, I bring you heavy Tidings, to morrow you must be burned, and your Chain is now buying; he put off his Hat and said, *Lord I thank thee, I have look for this a great while, it is not terrible*

to

some, God make me worthy of such a mercy, See the benefit of a prospect of, and preparation for sufferings.

4. Unbelief leaves our dearest interests and concerns in our own hands, i. e. commits nothing to God, and consequently must needs fill the heart with distracting Fears, when eminent dangers threaten us. Reader, if this be thy case, thou wilt be a *Mogor-missabib*, surrounded with Terrours, whensoever thou shalt be surrounded with dangers and troubles. Believers in this as well as in many other things have the advantage of thee, that they have committed all that is precious and valuable to them, into the hands of God by Faith, to him they have committed the keeping of their souls, 1 *Pet.* 4. 19. and all their eternal concernments, 2 *Tim.* 1. 12. And these being put into safe hands, they are not distracted with Fears about other matters of less value, but can trust them where they have intrusted the greater, and enjoy the quietness and peace of a resigned Soul to God. *Prov.* 16 3. But as for thee, thy life, thy liberty, yea, which is infinitely more than all these things, thy Soul will lie upon thy hands in the day of trouble, and thou wilt not know what to do with them, nor which way to dispose of them; O these be dreadful streights and freights that Unbelief leaves men in, 'tis a Fountain of Fears, and Distractions. And indeed it cannot but distract and confound carnal men in whom it reigns and is in its full strength, when sad experience shews us what Fears and Tremblings the very remains

and relicts of this sin begets in the best men, who are not fully freed from it. If the unpurged relicts of Unbelief in them, can thus darken and cloud their evidence, thus greaten and multiply their dangers, if it can draw such sad and frightful conclusions in their hearts, notwithstanding all the contrary experiences of their lives, as we see in that sad instance, 1 *Sam.* 27. 1. What panick Fears, and unrelieved terrours must it put those men under, where it is in its full strength and dominion.

4. *Cause.*

Moreover, we shall find many of our Fears raised and provocked in us by the *Promiscuous administrations* of Providence in this World, when we read in Scripture, That *There is one event to the righteous and to the wicked, and all things come alike to all, Eccles.* 9. 2. That when the Sword is drawn, God suffers it to cut off the Righteous and the Wicked, *Ezekiel* 21. 3. The Sword makes no difference, where God hath made so great a difference by Grace, it neither distinguishes Faces, nor Breasts, but is as soon sheathed in the bowels of the best, as of the worst of men; when we read how the same fire of Gods indignation, devours the green Tree and the dry Tree, *Ezek* 20. 47. How the basket of good figs (the embleme of the best men of those times) were carried into *Babylon* as well as the bad, *Jer.* 24. 5. How the flesh of Gods Saints hath been given for meat to the Fowls of Heaven, and to the Beasts of the field, *Psal.* 97. 12. And how the wicked have devoured

ed the man that is more righteous than himſelf, as it is *Habak.* 1. 13. I ſay, when we obſerve ſuch things in Scripture, and find our Obſervations confirmed by the accounts and hiſtories of former and latter ages, when we reflect upon the unſpeakable miſeries and butcheries of thoſe plain hearted and precious ſervants of Chriſt, the *Albingenſes* and *Waldenſes*, how they fell as a prey to their cruel adverſaries, notwithſtanding the convincing ſimplicity and holineſs of their lives, and all their fervent crys, and appeals to God, how the very flower of the reformed Proteſtant intereſt in *France*, was cut off with more than barbarous inhumanity, ſo that the Streets were waſhed, and the Canals of *Paris* ran with their precious blood

What horrid and unparallelled tortures the ſervants of God felt in that cruel Maſſacre in *Ireland*, a hiſtory too tragical for a tender hearted Reader to ſtay long upon: And how in our own Land, the moſt eminent Miniſters and Chriſtians were ſent to heaven in a fiery Chariot in thoſe doleful *Marian* dayes: I ſay when we read and conſider ſuch things as theſe, it rouzes our Fears, and puts us into frights when we ſee our ſelves threatned with the ſame enemies and dangers; when the feet of them that carried out the dear ſervants of God in bloody winding ſheets to their Graves, ſtand at the door to carry us forth next, if Providence looſe their chain, and give them a permiſſion ſo to do; and our Fears on this account are hightned by conſidering and revolving theſe four things in our thoughts,

which we are always more inclined to do, than the things that should fortifie our Faith, and heighten our Christian courage; as,

1. We are very apt to consider that as the same race and kind of men that committed these outrages upon our brethren, are still in Being, and that their rage and malice is not abated in the least degree, but is as fierce and cruel as ever it was, *Gal.* 4, 29. *As then he that was born after the flesh, persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now.* So it was then, and just so it is still, the old enmity is entailed upon all wicked men from generation to generation; *multi adhuc sunt qui clavum sanguine Abelis rubentem adhuc circumferunt. Cain's* club is to this day carried up and down the world, stained with the blood of *Abel*, as *Bucholtzer* speaks; 'tis a rooted antipathy, and it runs in a blood, and will run as long as there are wicked men, from whom & too whom it shall be propogated, & a devil in hell, by whom it will not fail to be exasperated and irritated.

2. We know also that nothing hinders the execution of their wicked purposes against us, but the restraints of Providence; should God loose the chain, and give them leave to act forth the malice and rage that is in their hearts, no pity would be shewen by them, or could be rationally expected from them, *Psal.* 124. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. We live among Lyons, and them that are set on fire of hell, *Psal.* 57. 4. The only reason of our safety is this, that he who is the keeper of the Lyons, is, also the shepherd of the sheep.

3. We

3. We find that God hath many times let loose these Lyons upon his people, and given them leave to tear his Lambs in pieces, and suck the blood of his Saints, how well soever he loves them, yet hath he often delivered them into the hands of his enemies, and suffered them to prepetuate and act the greatest cruelties upon them; the best men have suffered the worst things, and the Histories of all ages have delivered down unto us the most tragical relations of their barbarous usage.

4. We are also conscious to our selves how far short we come in holiness, innocency, and spiritual excellency of those excellent persons who have suffered these things, and therefore have no ground to expect more favour from Providence than they found; we know also there is no promise in the Scriptures, to which they had not as good a claim and title as our selves: With us are found as great, yea, greater sins than in them, and therefore have no reason to please our selves with the fond imaginations of extraordinary exemptions. If we think these evils shall not come in our days, 'tis like many of them thought so too, and yet they did, and we may find it quite otherwise, *Lam.* 4 12. *Who would have thought that the enemy, should have entered in at the gates of Jerusalem?* The revolving of these and such like considerations in our thoughts, and mixing our own unbelief with them creates a world of Fears even in good men, till by Resignation of all to God, and acting Faith upon the Promises that assure us of the

sanctification of all our troubles, as that *Rom.* 8. 28. Gods presence with us in our troubles as that *Psal.* 91. 15. his moderation of our troubles to that measure and degree in which they are supportable, *Isai.* 27. 8. And the safe and comfortable outlet and final deliverance from them all at last, according to that in *Rev.* 7. 17. We do at last recover our hearts out of the hands of our Fears again, and compose them to a quiet and sweet satisfaction in the wise and holy pleasure of our God.

5. *Cause.*

5. Our immoderate love of life, and the comforts and conveniences thereof may be assigned as a proper and real ground and cause of our sinful Fears, when the dangers of the times threaten the one or other: did we love our lives less, we should Fear and Tremble less than we do. It is said of those renowned Saints, *Rev* 12. 11. *They overcame by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their Testimony, and they loved not their lives unto the Death.*

They overcame, not only the fury of their enemies without them, but their sinful Fears within them; and this victory was atchieved by their mortification, to the inordinate and immoderate love of life, certainly their own Fears had overcome them, if they had not first overcome the love of life: It was not therefore without very great reason that our Lord injoyned it upon all his disciples and followers, to *hate their own lives*, *Luke* 14. 26. not absolutely, but in comparison and competition with him, (*i. e.*) to love it

it in so remiss a degree, as to slight and undervalue it as a poor low thing in such a comparison, he forsaw what sharp tryals and sufferings were coming upon them, and he knew if the fond and immoderate love of life were not overcome and mortified in them, it would make them warp and bend under such temptations.

This was it that freed *Paul* from slavish Fears, and made him so magnanimous and undaunted; indeed he had less Fear upon his Spirit, though he was to suffer those hard and sharp things in his own person, than his Friends had, who only sympathized with him, and were not farther concerned than by their own love and pity: He spake like a man who was rather a spectator than a sufferer, *Acts* 20. 24 25. *None of these things move me*, saith he, Great soul! not moved with Bonds and Afflictions? How did he attain so great courage and constancy of mind in such deep and dreadful sufferings? It was enough to have moved the stoutest man in the world, yea, and to have removed the resolutions of any that had not loved Christ better than his own life; but life was a trifle to him in comparison with Jesus Christ, for so he tells us in the next words, *I count not my life dear unto me*; *q. d.* 'Tis a low priz'd commodity in my eyes, not worth the saving or regarding on such sinful terms: O how many have parted with Christ, peace, and eternal life, or fear of losing that which *Paul* regarded not. And if we bring our thoughts closer to the matter, we shall soon find that this is a foundation of Fears in times of danger, and that from

from this exceſſive love of life, we are rack'd and tortured with ten thouſand terrors. For,

1. Life is the greateſt and neareſt intereſt men naturally have in this world, and that which wraps up all other inferiour intereſts in it ſelf, *Job* 2. 4. *Skin for skin, and all that a man hath will he give for his life.* It is a real truth, though it came from the mouth of the father of lies: afflictions never touch the quick till they touch the life: liberty, eſtates, and other accommodations in this world, receive their value and eſtimation from hence, if life be cut off, theſe accidents periſh, and are of no account, *Gen.* 25. 32. *Behold, I am at the point to die,* (*ſaid* Eſau) *and what profit ſhall this birth-right do to me?*

2. Life being naturally the deareſt intereſt of men in this world, the richeſt treaſure, and moſt beloved thing on earth to a natural man, that which ſtrikes at, and endangers life, muſt in his eyes be the greateſt evil that can befal him; on this account death becomes terrible to men, yea, as *Job* calls it, the *King of terrors* *Job* 18. 14. The black prince, or the prince of clouds and darkneſs, as ſome tranſlate thoſe words: Yea, ſo terrible is death upon this account, that the very fear of it hath ſometimes precipitated men into the hands of it, as we ſometimes obſerve in times of Peſtilence, the exceſſive Fear of the plague hath induced it.

Nonnullos ob timorem mortis ſubitaneæ periiſſe refert Galenus. Quod igitur homo, timore mortis quæ eſt terribiliſſima, ex ſententia Ariſtotelis *aliorumque*

orumq; penè omnium, moriatur, mirandum non est. Fuga mali, ipsum interdum accersit, quod liquet exemplis eorum, quorum metus mortem à judice ipsis designatam prævenit. Stern. de mort. p. 167.

3. Though death be terrible in any shape, in the mildest form it can appear in; yet a violent and bloudy Death by the hands of cruel and merciless men, is the most terrible form that Death can appear in; 'Tis now the King of terrors indeed, in the most ghastly representation and frightful form, in its scarlet Robes, and terrifying formalities. In a violent death all the barbarous cruelty that the wit of our enemies can invent, or their malice inflict, is mingled together; in a violent Death are many Deaths contrived into one, and it oftentimes approaches men by such slow and deliberate paces, that they feel every tread of its foot, as it advanceth towards them, *Moriatur, ut sentiat se mori*, Let him so die, (said the Tyrant) that he may feel himself to die, yea, and how he dies by inchmeal, or slow and lingring degrees; this is exceeding frightful, especially to those that are of a more soft and tender nature and temper, who must needs be struck through with the terrours of Death, except the Lord arm them against it with the assurance of a better life, and sweeten these bitter apprehensions by the foretasts of it. This is enough to put even sanctified nature into a consternation, and make a very gracious heart to sink, unless it be so upheld by Divine strength and comfort: And hence come many,

very

very many of our Fears and Terrors, especially when the same enemies that have been accustomed to this bloody work, shall be found confederating and designing again to break in upon us, and act over again as much cruelty as ever they have done upon our brethren, in times past.

6. *Cause.*

To conclude, many of our sinful Fears and Consternations flow from the influences of Satan upon our phantasies. They say winds and storms are oft times raised by Satan, both by Sea and Land, and I never doubted but the Prince of the power of the Air, by Gods permission can, and often doth put the world into great Frights and disturbances by such tempests, *Job* 1. 19. He can raise the loftiest winds, pour down roaring showers, rattle in the Air with fearful claps of thunder, and scar the lower world with terrible flashes of lightning. And I doubt not but he hath by the same permission a great deal of influence and power upon the Fancies and Passions of men, and can raise more terrible Storms and Tempests within us, than ever we heard or felt without us: he can by leave from God approach our *Phantasies*, disturb and trouble them exceedinly by forming frightful Idea's there, for Satan not only works upon men mediatly by the ministery of their external senses, but by reason of his Spiritual anhelical nature, he can have immediat access to the internal sense also, as appears by diabolical dreams, and by practising upon that power of the Soul, he

he Influences the passions of it, and puts it under very dreadful apprehensions and consternations: Now if Satan can provoke and exasperate the fury and rage of wicked men, as is evident he can do, *Rev.* 2. 10. and so disturb our Fancies and influence our passions, as there is no reason to doubt, but by leave from God he can do, as well as he can go to the magazins and storehouses of thunder, lightnings, and storms. O what inward storms of Fear, can he shake our hearts withal, and if God give him but a permission, how ready will he be to do it? seing it is so conducible to his design: for by putting men into such Frights, he at once weakens their hands in duty, as is plain from his this way upon *Nehemiah*, *Chap.* 6. 13. and if he prevail there, he drives them into the snares, and trains of his temptations, as the Fishermen and Fowler do the Birds and Fishes into their nets; when once they have flusht and frighted them out of their coverts. And thus you have some account of the principal and true causes of our Sinful Fear.

CHAP. V.

Laying open the sinful and lamentable effects of slavish and inordinate Fear, *both in carnal and regenerated persons.*

SECT. I.

HAving taken a view in the former Chapters of the kinds and Causes of Fear; and seen what lies at the root of slavish Fear, and both breeds

breeds and feeds it, what fruit can we expect from such a cursed Plant, but Gall and Wormwood, Fruit as bitter as death it self? Let us then in the next place examine and well consider the following and deplorable effects of Fear to excite us to apply our selves the more concernedly to those directions that follow in the close of this Treatise for the cure of it. And,

1. *Effect.*

The first effect of this sinful and exorbitant Passion, is *Distraction* of mind and thoughts in Duty; both *Cicero* and *Quintilian* will have the word *tumultus*, a tumult to come from *timor multus*, much Fear, 'tis a compound of these two words; much fear raises great uproars and tumults in the Soul, and puts all into hurries and distractions, so that we cannot attend upon any service of God, with profit or comfort. It was therefore a very necessary mercy that was requested of God, *Luke* 1. 74. *That we being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, might serve him without* Fear. For it is impossible to serve God without Distractions till we can serve him without the slavish fear of enemies. The reverential Fear of God is the greatest spur to Duty, and choicest help in it, but the distracting Fears of men will either wholly divert us from our Duty, or destroy the comfort and benefit of our Duties; 'tis a deadly snare of the Devil, to hinder all comfortable intercourse with God.

It is very remakable, that when the Apostle was giving his advice to the *Corinthians*, about marriage in those times of persecution and difficulty,

ficulty, he commends to them a single life as most eligible; where it may be without other sinful inconveniencies, and that principally for this reason, *That they might attend upon the Lord without distractions*, 1 Cor. 7. 35. He forsaw what streights cares, and fears must unavoidably distract them in such times that were most clogged and incumbred with Families and Relations, when a man should be thinking, O what shall I do now to get my doubts and fears resolved about my interest in Christ? How may I so behave my self in my sufferings as to credit Religion, and not become a scandal and stumbling stone to others? His thoughts are taken up with other cares and fears! O what will become of my wife & poor little ones! what shall I do with them, and for them, to secure them from danger?

I doubt not but it is a great design of the Devil to keep us in continual alarms and frights, and to puzle our heads and hearts with a thousand difficulties which possibly may never befal us, or if they do, shall never prove so fatal to us as we fancy them, and all this to unfit us for our present duties, and destroy our comfort therein; for if by frights and terrors of mind he can but once distract our thoughts, he gains three great points upon us, to our unspeakable loss.

1 Hereby he will cut off the freedom and sweetness of our communion with God in Duties, and what an empty shell will the best Duties be, when this kernal is wormed out by such a subtile artifice? Prayer as *Damascen* aptly

aptly expresses it, is Ἀνὰ βασις τῦ νῦ the ascention of the mind or soul to God; but distraction clips its wings; he can never offer up his soul and thoughts to God, that hath not the possession of them himself; and he that is under distracting fears possesseth not himself. The life of all communion with God in prayer, consists in the harmony that is betwixt our hearts and words, and both with the will of God; this harmony is spoiled by distractions, and so Satan gains that point.

2. But this is not all he gains, and we lose by distracting fears; for as they cut off the freedom and sweetness of our intercourse with God in prayer, so they cut off the Soul from the succours and reliefs it might otherwise draw from the promises. We find when the *Israelites* were in great bondage, wherein their minds were distracted with fears and sorrows, they regarded not the supporting promises of deliverance sent them by *Moses* *Exod.* 6. 9. *David* had an express and particular pomise of the Kingdom from the mouth of God, which must needs include his deliverance out of the hand of *Saul*, and all his stratagems to destroy him; but yet when eminent hazards were before his eyes, he was afraid, and that fear betrayed the succours from the promise, so that it drew a quite contrary inclusion, 1 *Sam.* 27. 1. *I shall one day perish by the hand of Saul*: And again he is at the same point, *Psal.* 116 11. *All men are liars*, not excepting *Samuel* himself, who had assured him of the Kingdom. This is always the property and

nature

nature of fear (as I shewed before) to make men distrust the best security when they are in eminent peril: But Oh what a mischief is this! to make us suspicious of the promises which are our chief relief and support in times of trouble: Our fears will unfit us for Prayer, they will also shake the credit of the promises with us, and so great is the damage we receive both ways, that it were better for us to lose our two eyes, than two such advantages in trouble. But,

3. This is not all, by our present fears we lose the benefit and comfort of all our past experiences, and the singular relief we might have from all that faithfulness and goodness of God which our eyes have seen in former streights and dangers, the present fear clouds them all, *Isa.* 51. 12. 13. Men and dangers are so much minded, that God is forgotten, even the God that hath hitherto preserved us, though our former fears told us, the enemy was daily ready to devour us. All these sweet reliefs are cut off from us by our distracting fears, and that at a time when we have most need of them.

2. *Effects.*

Dissimulation and Hypocrisie is the fruit of slavish Fear; distraction you see is bad enough, but dissimulation is worse than distraction, and yet as bad as it is, fear hath driven good men into this snare; it will even make an upright soul wrap and bend from the rules of that integrity, and candor which should be inseperable at all times from a Christian: Of whom (saith God to his *Israel*) hast thou been affraid that thou hast lied,

lied, and hast not remembred me? God finds falshood, and charges it upon Fear, *q. d.* I know it was against the resolutions of my peoples hearts thus to dissemble, this certainly is the effect of a fright; Who is he that hath scarred you into this evil? It was *Abraham's* fear that made him dissemble to that reproach of his Religion. *Gen.* 20 2, 11. And indeed it was but an odd sight to see an heathen so schooling and reproving great *Abraham* about it as he there doth.

It was nothing but fear that drew his Son *Isaac* into the like snare, *Gen.* 26. 7. And it was fear that overcame *Peter* against his promise as well as principle, to say concerning his dear Saviour, *I know not the man*, *Mat.* 26 69. Had *Abraham* at that time remembred, and acted his Faith freely upon what the Lord said to him, *Gen.* 17. 1. *Fear not Abraham, I am thy Shield*, he had escaped both the sin & shame into which he fell, but even that great Believer was foiled by his own fears; and certainly this is a great evil, accomplicated mischief. For,

1. By these falls and scandals, Religion is made vile and contemptible in the eyes of the world, it reflects with much reproach upon God and his promises, as if his word were not sufficient security for us to rely upon in times of trouble, as if it were safer thrusting to our wit, yea, to sin, than to the Promises.

2. It greatly weakens the hands of others, and proves a sore discouragement to them in their tryals, to see their brethren faint for fear, and

Ashamed

aſhamed to own their principles; ſometimes it hath this miſchievous effect, but it is always improved by Satan and wicked men to this purpoſe. And,

3. It will be a terrible blow and wound to our own Conſciences, for ſuch flaws in our integrity we may be kept waking and ſighing many a night; *O* ſee the miſchiefs of a timorous and faint ſpirit.

3. *Eff. 3.*

Slavish Fears of the Creature exceedingly ſtrengthen our temptations in times of danger, and make them very efficacious and prevalent upon us. *Prov.* 29. 25. *The fear of man brings a ſnare.* Satan ſpreads the net, but we are not within its reach, till our own fears drive us into it; the recoyling of our ſpirits from ſome eminent danger may cauſe the pulſe of a true Chriſtian to intermit and faulter, how regular ſoever it beats at other times, this will cauſe great trepidation and timidity in men that are ſincere and upright, and hat is it that brings the ſnare over their ſouls. *Aaron* was a good man, and Idolatry he knew to be a great ſin, yet fear prevailed with that good man to give too much way to that great evil, *Exod.* 32. 22 *Thou knoweſt the people that they are ſet upon miſchief*, ſaith he in his own excuſe, in the matter of the golden calf, *q. d.* Lord I durſt do no otherwiſe at that time, the people were violently and paſſionately ſet upon it; had I reſiſted them, it might have coſt me dear.

It was fear that prevailed with *Origen* to yield ſo

so far as he did in offering incense to the *Idol*, the consideration of which fact brake his heart to pieces. It was nothing but fear that made *David* play the fool, and act so dishonourably as he did, 1 *Sam.* 21. 12. Fear is a snare in which Satan hath caught as many souls as in any other of his stratagems and toyls whatsoever. It were easie to give instances, so many and so sad, as would inlarge this head even to tediousness, but I chuse rather to come to the particulars wherein the danger of this snare of the Devil consists. And,

1. Herein lies the ensnaring danger of sinful fear that it drives men out of their proper station, out of their place and duty, beside which there is none to be found but what is Satans ground. The subtile enemy of our salvation is aware that we are out of Gun-shot, beyond his reach, whilst we abide with God in the way of duty, that the Lord is with us, whilst we are with him, and there is no attempting our ruine under the wings of his protection. If ever therefore he meaneth to do any thing upon us, he must get us off that ground, and from under those wings, and there is nothing like fear to do this; then we are as the Birds that are wandring from their nests, *Prov.* 27. 8. Or like *Shimei* out of his limits.

2. Fear is usually the first passion in the soul that beats a parley with the enemy, and treats with the Tempter about terms of rendition: and as the *French* proverb is, *The Castle that parlies, is half wone.* 'Tis fear that consults with flesh and blood, whilst faith is ingaged with God

for

for the supply of strength to endure the siege: we have a sad and doleful instance of this in *Spira*, he tells us how his own fears betrayed him, by parlying with the Temper, or this Mr. *Bacon* in the History of his life records the occasion of his Fall. *Whilst* Spira *was tossing upon the restlesse waves of doubts, without Guide to trust to, or Heaven to flee to for succour; on the sudden, Gods Spirit assisting, he felt a calm, and began to Discourse with himself in this manner: Why wanderest thou thus in uncertainties? Unhappy man! cast away fear, put on thy shield of Faith; where is thy wonted courage, thy goodnesse, thy constany? Remember that Christs Glory lies at the stake, suffer then without fear, and he will defend thee, he will tell thee what thou shalt answer; he can beat down all danger, bring thee out of prison, raise thee from the dead: Consider* Peter *in the Dungeon, the Martyrs in the fire, &c.*

Now was Spira *in reasonable quiet, being resolved to yield to these weighty Reasons; yet holding it wisdom to examine all things: he consults also with flesh and blood: thus the battel renews, and the flesh begins in this manner:* Be well advised, *fond man, consider reasons on both sides, and then judge, how canst thou thus overween thine own sufficiency, as thou neither regardest the examples of thy progenitors, nor the judgement of the whole Church, dost thou not consider what misery thu days rashnes will bring thee unto? Thou shalt lose all thy substance gotten with so much care and travel, thou*

shalt

shalt undergo the most exquisite torments that malice it self can devise, thou shalt be counted an Heretick of all, and to close up all, thou shalt die shamefully, What thinkest thou of the loathsome stinking Dungeon, the bloody Ax, the burning Faggot? Are they delightful, &c. Thus through fear he first parlied with the Tempter, consulted with flesh and blood, and at last fainted and yielded.

3. 'Tis fear that makes men impatient of waiting Gods time and method of deliverance, and so precipitates the soul, and drives it into the snare of the next Temptation, *Isa.* 51. 14. *The Captive exile hasteth to be delivered out of the pit,* any way or means of escape that comes next to hand, saith Fear; is better than to lie here in the pit, and when the soul is thus prepared by its own Fears, it becomes an easy prey to the next Temptation, by all which you see the mischief that comes by fear in times of danger.

4 Effect.

4. Fear naturally produceth Pusillanimity, and cowardliness in men, a poor low spirit, that presently faints and yields upon every slight assault: it extinguisheth all Christian courage and magnanimity where ever it prevails, and therefore you find it joyned frequently in the Scriptures with discouragement, *Deut.* 1. 21. *Fear not, neither be discouraged with fainting and trembling. Deut.* 20. 3 *Let not your hearts faint, fear not, and do not tremble*; with dismayedness. *Deut.* 31. 6. and faint-heartedness, *Isai.* 7. 4. these are the effects & consequents of sinful fear. And how dangerous a thing it is to have our

courage

courage extinguiſhed, and faintneſs of heart prevail upon us in a time when we have the greateſt need and uſe of courage and our perſeverance, peace and eternal happineſs rely and depend ſo much upon it, let all ſerious Chriſtians judge, 'tis ſad to us and diſhonourable to Religion to have the hearts of women, as it's ſaid of *Egypt*, *Iſai.* 19 16. When we ſhould play the men as the Apoſtle exhorts us, 1 *Cor.* 16. 13. We find in all ages thoſe that have manifeſted moſt courage for Chriſt in time of trial, have been thoſe whoſe Faith hath ſurmounted Fear, and whoſe hearts were above all diſcouragemẽts from this world.

Such a man was *Baſil*, as appears by his anſwer to *Valens* the Emperor who tempting him with offers of preferment, received this anſwer, Offer theſe things, ſaid he, to children; and when he threatned him with grivous ſufferings, he replied, threaten theſe things to your purple gallants that give themſelves to pleaſure, and are afraid to die.

And this was the ſpirit of courage magnanimity with which the generality of the Primitive Chriſtians were animated, they feared not the faces of Tyrants, they ſhrunk not from the moſt cruel torments, and it redounded not a little to the credit of Chriſtianity, when one of *Julians* Nobles preſent at the tormenting of *Marcus* Biſhop of *Arethuſa*, told the *Apoſtate* to his face, We are aſhamed O Emperour, the Chriſtians laugh at your cruelty, and grow more reſolute by it. So *Lactantius* alſo teſtifies to them, our women & children, ſaith he, not to ſpeak of men,

shalt undergo the most exquisite torments that malice it self can devise, thou shalt be counted an Heretick of all, and to close up all, thou shalt die shamefully, What thinkest thou of the loathsome stinking Dungeon, the bloody Ax, the burning Faggot? Are they delightful, &c. Thus through fear he first parlied with the Tempter, consulted with flesh and blood, and at last fainted and yielded.

3. 'Tis fear that makes men impatient of waiting Gods time and method of deliverance, and so precipitates the soul, and drives it into the snare of the next Temptation, *Isa.* 51. 14. *The Captive exile halteth to be delivered out of the pit,* any way or means of escape that comes next to hand, saith Fear, is better than to lie here in the pit, and when the soul is thus prepared by its own Fears, it becomes an easy prey to the next Temptation, by all which you see the mischief that comes by fear in times of danger.

4 *Effect.*

4. Fear naturally produceth Pusillanimity, and cowardliness in men, a poor low spirit, that presently faints and yields upon every slight assault: it extinguisheth all Christian courage and magnanimity where ever it prevails, and therefore you find it joyned frequently in the Scriptures with discouragement, *Deut.* 1. 21. *Fear not, neither be discouraged with fainting and trembling. Deut.* 20. 3 *Let not your hearts faint, fear not, and do not tremble*; with dismayedness. *Deut.* 31. 6 and faint-heartedness, *Isai.* 7. 4. these are the effects & consequents of sinful fear: And how dangerous a thing it is to have our courage

courage extinguished, and faintness of heart prevail upon us in a time when we have the greatest need and use of courage and our perserverance, peace and eternal happiness rely and depend so much upon it, let all serious Christians judge, 'tis sad to us and dishonourable to Religion to have the hearts of women, as it's said of *Egypt*, *Isai.* 19 16. When we should play the men as the Apostle exhorts us, 1 *Cor.* 16. 13. We find in all ages those that have manifested most courage for Christ in time of trial, have been those whose Faith hath surmounted Fear, and whose hearts were above all discouragemēts from this world.

Such a man was *Basil*, as appears by his answer to *Valens* the Emperor who tempting him with offers of preferment, received this answer, Offer these things, said he, to children; and when he threatned him with grivous sufferings, he replied, threaten these things to your purple gallants that give themselves to pleasure, and are afraid to die.

And this was the spirit of courage magnanimity with which the generality of the Primitive Christians were animated, they feared not the faces of Tyrants, they shrunk not from the most cruel torments, and it redounded not a little to the credit of Christianity, when one of *Julians* Nobles present at the tormenting of *Marcus* Bishop of *Arethusa*, told the *Apostate* to his face, We are ashamed O Emperour, the Christians laugh at your cruelty, and grow more resolute by it. So *Lactantius* also testifies to them, our women & children, saith he, not to speak of men,

overcome their torments, and the fire cannot fetch so much as a sigh from them. If *carnal fear* once get the *ascendant* over us, all our courage and resolution will flag, and melt away; we may suffer out of unavoidable necessity, but shal never honour Christ and Religion by our sufferings.

5. Effect.

Carnal Fear is the very root of Apostacy, it hath made thousands of professors to faint and fall away in the hour of temptation, it is not so much from the fury of our enemies without, as from our own fears within, that temptations become victorious over us; from the beginning of fears, Christ dates the beginning apostacy, *Matth.* 24. 9. 10. *Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you, and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name sake, and then shall many be offended.* When troubles and dangers come to an height then fears begin to work at an height too, and then is the critical hour; fears are high, and faith is low; temptations strong, and resistance weak. Satan knocks at the door, and fear opens it; and yeelds up the soul to him, except special aid and assistance come in seasonably from heaven. So long as we can profess *Religion*, without any great hazard of life, liberty, or estates, we may shew much zeal and forwardness in the wayes of godliness, but when it comes to the sharpes, to resisting unto blood, few will be found to own and assert it openly in the face of such dangers. The first retreat is usually made from a free and open to a close & concealed practise of religion not opening our windows

windows as *Daniel* did, to shew we care not who knows we dare worship our God and are not ashamed of our duties, but hidding our principles and practices with all the art and care imaginable, reckoning it well if we can escape danger by letting fall our profession which might expos us to it: But if the inquest go on, and we cannot be secured any longer under this refuge, we must comply with false worship, and give some open signal that we do so, or else be marked out for ruine; then saith Fear, give a little more ground and retreat to the next security, which is to comply seemingly with that which we do not allow hoping God will be merciful to us, and accept us if we keep our hearts for him, though we are forced thus to dissemble and hid our principles. *Eamus ad communem errorem*, said *Calderinus*. when going to the Mass, let us go to the common error; and as *Seneca* adviseth about worshiping the *Roman Gods*, *in animi religione non habeat sed in actibus fingat*, let us make a semblance and shew of worshipping them, though our hearts give no Religious respect to them: But if still the temptation hunt us further, and we come to be more narrowly listed, and put to a severer Test, by subscribing contrary Articles or renouncing our former avowed principles, and that upon penalty of death, and lose of all that is dear to us in this world; now nothing in all the world hazards our eternal salvation, as our own fears will do; this is like to be the rock on which we shall split all, and make an horrible shipwrack both of truth and peace: This was

the case of *Cranmer*, whose fears caused him to subscribe against the dictates of his own conscience, and cowardly to betray the known truth, and indeed there is no temptation in the world that hath overthrown so many as that which hath been backt and edged with fear; the love of Preferments & honours hath slain its thousands, but fear of sufferings its ten thousands.

6. *Effect.*

Sinful Fear puts men under great boundage of Spirit, and makes Death a thousand times more terrible & intollerable than it would otherways be to us, You read of some, *Heb.* 2. 15. *Who through the fear of death were all their life time subject to bondage,* (*i. e.*) It kept them in a miserable anxiety and perplexity of mind, like slaves that tremble at the whip which is held over them: Thus many thousands live under the lash, so terrible is the name of death, especially a violent death, that *they* are not able with patience to hear it mentioned; which gave the ground of that saying, *præstat semel, quam semper mori, Its better to die once, than to be dying alwayes.* And surely there is not a more miserable life any poor creature can live, than such a trembling life as this is. For,

1. Such a bondage as this destroys all the comfort and pleasure of life, no pleasure can grow or thrive under the shadow of this cursed Plant, *Nil est beatum cui semper aliquis terror impendeat,* (*Cicero Tusc. Q.* 15.) saith *Cicero.* All the comforts we possess in this World are imbittered by it. 'Tis storied of *Democles* a flatterer of

of *Dionysius* the Tyrant, that he told him, *he was the happiest man in the World, having Wealth, Power, Majesty, and abundance of all things: Dionysius* sets the Flatterer in all his own pomp at a Table furnished with all fine dainties, and attended upon as a King, but with an heavy sharp sword hanging by a single Horse hair right over his head, this made him quake and tremble so that he could neither eat nor drink but desired to be freed from that estate: The design was to convince him how miserable a life they live who live under the continual terrours of impending death and ruine. It was a sore judgement which God threatned against them in *Jer.* 5.6. *A Lion out of the forrest shall slay them, and a wolf of the evening shall spoil them, a Leopard shall watch over their Cities, every one that goeth out thence shall be torn in pieces*, What a miserable life must those people live, who could not stir out of the City, but they presently were seized by Lyons, Wolves and Leopards, that watch'd over them, and lurked in all the Avenews to make them a prey, and yet this is more tolerable than for a mans own fear to watch continually over him.

2. And yet I could wish this were the worst of it, and that our fears destroyed no better comforts than the natural comforts of this life, but alace! they also destroy our spiritual comforts which we might have from Gods promises, and our own and others experiences, which are incomparably the sweetest pleasures men have in this World; But as no creature comfort is plea-

ſant, ſo no promiſe relishes like it ſelf to him that lives in this bondage of Fear, when the terrors of death are great, the conſolations of the Almighty are ſmall.

In the written word are found all ſorts of refreshing ſtrengthening, and heart reviving promiſes, prepared by the wiſdom and care of God for our relief in the days of darkneſs and trouble promiſes of ſupport under the heavieſt burdens and preſſures, *Iſaiah* 41. 10. *Fear not, for I am with thee, be not diſmayed, for I am thy God, I will ſtrengthen thee, yea, I will help thee, yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteouſneſs.* A promiſe able to make the moſt timorous and trembling ſoul to shout with the joy of men in harveſt, or as they that divide the ſpoil.

There are found the encouraging promiſes of defence and protection, *Iſai.* 27. 2, 3. And *Iſa.* 33. 2. Promiſes that lead us into the Almighty power of God, and put us under the wings of his care in time of danger.

Promiſes of moderation and mitigation in the day of sharp affliction that we may be able to bear it, *Iſa.* 27. 8. 1 *Cor.* 10. 13.

Promiſes of deliverance out of troubles, if the malice of man bring us into trouble, the mercy of God will aſſuredly bring us out, *Pſal.* 91. 14. 15. and *Pſal.* 129. 3.

And which is moſt comfortable of all the reſt, promiſes to Sanctifie and bleſs our troubles to our good, ſo that they shall not only ceaſe to be hurtful, but by vertue of the promiſe, become exceeding benefical to us, *Iſa.* 27. 9. *Rom.* 8. 28.

All

All these promises are provided by our tender Father for us against a day of straits and fears; and because he knew our weakness, and how apt our fears would be to make us suspect our security by them, he hath for the performance of them, engaged his wisdom, power, care, faithfulness, and unchangeableness, 2 *Pet.* 2. 9. *Isaiah* 27. 23. 2 *Chron* 16. 9. 1. *Cor.* 10. 13. *Isai.* 43. 1. 2. In the midst of such promises so sealed how chearful and magnanimous should we be in the worst times? And say as *David*, *Psal.* 49 5. *Why should I fear in the day of evil?* Let those that have no God to flee to, no promise to rely upon, let them fear in the day of evil, I have no cause to do so. But even from these most comfortable refuges in the promises our own fears beat us, we are so scared that we mind them not, so as to draw encouragement, resolution, and courage from them: Thus the Shields of the mighty are vilely cast away.

So for all the choice records of the Saints experiences in all former troubles and distresses; God hath by a singular providence, (aiming at our relief in future distresses,) preserved them for us; if danger threaten us; we may turn to the recorded experiences his people have left us, of the strange and mighty influence of his providence upon the hearts of their enemies, to shew them favour, *Gen.* 31. 29. *Ps.* 106. 46. *Jer.* 15. 11.

There also are found the ancient Rolls and Records of the admirable *methods* of his peoples deliverance, contrived by his infinite and unsearchable wisdom for them, when all their own

thoughts have been at a loſs, and their underſtandings poſed and ſtaggered, *Exod.* 15. 6. 2. *Chron.* 20. 12. 15. 2 *King* 19. 3. 7.

There are the recorded experiences of Gods unſpotted faithfulneſs, which never failed any ſoul that durſt truſt himſelf in its arms. *Mica.* 6. 4. 5. *Josh.* 7. 9.

There alſo are to be found the Records of his tender and moſt fatherly care for his children; who have been to him as a peculiar treaſure in times of danger, *Pſal.* 40. 17. *Deut.* 32. 10, 11, 12. *Iſa.* 49. 16. *Job* 36. 7. 2. *Chro.* 16. 9.

All theſe and many more ſupports and cordials are made ready to our hand and provided for a day of trouble; but alas to what purpoſe; if our own fears ſo tranſport us that we can neither apply them, nor ſo much as calmly ponder and conſider them,

3. To conclude, by theſe fears we are deprived of thoſe manifold advantages we might gain by the calm and compoſed meditations of our own death, and the change it will make upon us; could we ſit down in peace, and meditate in a familiar way upon death; could we look with a compoſed and well ſetled mind into our own graves, and not be ſcared and frighted with the thoughts of death, and ſtartle when ever we take it, (though but in our thoughts) by the cold hand: To what ſeriouſneſs would thoſe meditations frame us? And what abundance of evils would they prevent in our converſations? the ſprinkling of duſt upon new writing, prevents many a blot and blur in our books or letters;

ters; and could we thus ſprinkle the duſt of the grave up on our minds, it would prevent many a ſin and miſcarriage in our words and actions: But there is no profit or advantage redounding to us either from promiſes, experiences, or death it ſelf when the ſoul is diſcompoſed and put into confuſion by its own fears. And thus you ſee ſome of thoſe many miſchievous effects of your own fears.

CHAP. VI.

Preſcribing the rules to cure our ſinful Fears, and prevent theſe ſad and woful effects of them.

SECT I.

WE are now come to the moſt difficult part of the work, *viz. The cure*, of the ſinful & ſlaviſh fear of Creatures in times of danger, which if it might through the bleſſing of God be effected, we might live at *hearts eaſe* in the midſt of all our enemies and troubles and like the Sun in the Heavens, keep on our ſteady courſe in the darkeſt and gloomieſt day: But before I come to the particular Rules, it will be neceſſary for the prevention of miſtakes, to lay down three uſeful cautions about this matter.

1. *Caution.*

Underſtand that none but thoſe that are in Chriſt are capable to improve the following Rules to their advantage. The ſecurity of our ſouls in the great argument uſed by Chriſt to extinguiſh our fears of them that can kill the Body,

thoughts have been at a loss, and their understandings posed and staggered, *Exod.* 15. 6. 2. *Chron.* 20. 12. 15. 2 *King* 19. 3. 7.

Where are the recorded experiences of Gods unspotted faithfulness, which never failed any soul that durst trust himself in its arms. *Mica.* 6. 4. 5. *Josh.* 7. 9.

There also are to be found the Records of his tender and most fatherly care for his children; who have been to him as a peculiar treasure in times of danger, *Psal.* 41. 17. *Deut.* 32. 10, 11, 12. *Isa.* 49. 16. *Job* 36. 7. 2. *Chro.* 16. 9.

All these and many more supports and cordials are made ready to our hand and provided for a day of trouble; but alas to what purpose; if our own fears so transport us that we can neither apply them, nor so much as calmly ponder and consider them,

3. To conclude, by these fears we are deprived of those manifold advantages we might gain by the calm and composed meditations of our own death, and the change it will make upon us; could we sit down in peace, and meditate in a familiar way upon death; could we look with a composed and well setled mind into our own graves, and not be scared and frighted with the thoughts of death, and startle when ever we take it, (though but in our thoughts) by the cold hand: To what seriousness would those meditations frame us? And what abundance of evils would they prevent in our conversations? the sprinkling of dust upon new writing, prevents many a blot and blur in our books or letters;

ters; and could we thus ſprinkle the duſt of the grave up on our minds, it would prevent many a ſin and miſcarriage in our words and actions: But there is no profit or advantage redounding to us either from promiſes, experiences, or death it ſelf when the ſoul is diſcompoſed and put into confuſſion by its own fears. And thus you ſee ſome of thoſe many miſchievous effects of your own fears.

CHAP. VI.

Preſcribing the rules to cure our ſinful Fears, and prevent theſe ſad and woful effects of them.

SECT I.

WE are now come to the moſt difficult part of the work, *viz. The cure*, of the ſinful & ſlaviſh fear of Creatures in times of danger, which if it might through the bleſſing of God be effected, we might live at *hearts eaſe* in the midſt of all our enemies and troubles, and like the Sun in the Heavens, keep on our ſteady courſe in the darkeſt and gloomieſt day: But before I come to the particular Rules, it will be neceſſary for the prevention of miſtakes, to lay down three uſeful cautions about this matter.

1. *Caution.*

Underſtand that none but thoſe that are in Chriſt are capable to improve the following Rules to their advantage. The ſecurity of our ſouls in the great argument uſed by Chriſt to extinguiſh our fears of them that can kill the Body,

Mat. 10. 28. But if the Soul muſt unavoidably periſh when the Body doth, if it muſt drop into hell before the body be laid in the grave: If he that kills the body doth by the ſame ſtroak cut off the Soul from all the means and poſſibilities of mercy and happineſs for ever; what can be offered in ſuch a caſe, to relieve a man againſt fear and trembling.

2. *Caution.*

Expect not a perfect cure of your fears in this life; whilſt there are enemies and dangers, there will be ſome fears working in the beſt hearts: If our Faith could be perfected, our Fears would be perfectly cured; but whileſt there is ſo much weakneſs in our Faith; there will be too much ſtrength in our Fears.

And for thoſe who are naturally timorous, who have more of this paſſion in their conſtitution than other men have; and thoſe in whom melancholly is a rooted and chronical diſeaſe; it will be hard for them totally to rid themſelves of fears and dejections, though in the uſe of ſuch helps and means as follow, they may be greatly relieved againſt the tyranny of them, and enabled to poſſeſs their ſouls in much more tranquillity and comfort.

3. *Caution.*

Whoſoever expects the benefit of the following Preſcriptions and Rules, muſt not think the Reading or bare remembring them will do the work; but he muſt work them into his heart by believing and fixed meditation, and live in the daily practice of them. It is not our opening

of

of our case to a Physician, nor his Prescriptions and written directions that will cure a man, but he must resolve to take the bitter and nauseous potions how much soever he loath it, to abstain from hurtful diet, how well soever he loves it, if ever he expect to be a sound and healthful man. So it is in this case also. These things premised thee.

1. *Rule.*

The first Rule to relieve us against our Slavish Fears, *Is seriously to consider, and more throughly to study the Covenant of Grace within the blessed Clasp and Bond whereof all believers are.* I think the clear understanding of the Nature, Extent, and Stability of the Covenant, and of our interest therein, would go a great way in the cure of our sinful and slavish Fears.

A Covenant is more than a naked promise, in the Covenant, God hath graciously consulted our weakness, fears, and doubts, and therefore proceeds with us in the highest way of solemnity confirming his promises by Oath, *Heb.* 6. 13. 17. and by Seals, *Rom.* 4. 11. Putting himself under the most solemn ties and engagements that can be, to his people, that from so firm a renuncation of the Covenant with us, we might have strong consolation, *Heb.* 6. 18. He hath so ordered it, that it might afford strong supports & the most reviving cordials to our faint and timorous Spirits, in all the plunges of trouble both from within and from without. In the Covenant God makes over himself to his people, to be unto them a God, *Jer.* 31. 33. *Heb.* 8. 10. Wherein the

the Lord beſtowes himſelf in all his Glorious Eſſential properties upon us, to the end that whatſoever his Almighty power, Infinite wiſdom, and incomprehenſible mercy can afford for our protection, ſupport, deliverance, direction, pardon or refreshment; we might be aſſured ſhall be faithfully performed to us in all the ſtraits, fears, and exigencies of our lives. This God expects we ſhould improve by Faith as the moſt ſovereign antidote againſt all our Fears in this world, *Iſaiah* 43. 1, 2. *Thus ſaith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O* Iſrael; *fear not, for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine; when thou paſſeſt through the waters, I will be with thee, &c.* Iſaiah 41. 10. *Fear not, for I am with thee, be not diſmaied, for I am thy God.*

And if thou Reader, be within the bond of this Covenant, thou mayeſt ſurely find enough there to quiet thy heart, whatever the matter or ground of thy fears be: If God be thy Covenant God he will be with thee in all thy ſtreights wants, & troubles, he will never leave, nor forſake thee, From the Covenant it was that *David* encouraged *himſelf* againſt all his troubles 2 *Sam.* 23. 5. *Although my houſe be not ſo with God, yet hath he made with me an everlaſting Covenant, well ordered in all things and ſure; and this is all my ſalvation, and all my deſire, though he make it not to grow.* He could fetch all reliefs, all comforts, all ſalvations out of it, and why cannot we? He deſired no more for the ſupport of his heart; *this is all my deſire;* and ſure if we underſtood

understood and believed it as he did, we could desire no more to quiet and comfort our hearts than what this Covenant affords us. For,

1. Are we afraid what our enemies will do? We know we are in the midst of Potent, Politick, and enraged enemies; we have heard what they have done, and see what they are preparing to do again; we tremble to think what bloody Tragidies are like to be acted over again in the world by their cruel hands: But O what heroick and noble acts of faith should the covenant of thy God enable thee to exert amidst all these fears? If God be thy God, then thou hast an Almighty God on thy side, and that is enough to extinguish all these Fears, *Psal.* 118. 6 *The Lord is on my side, I will not fear what man can do unto me.* Your fears come in the name of man, but your help in the name of the Lord: Let them plot, threaten, yea, and smite too; God is a shield to all that fear him, and if God be for us, who can be against us?

2. Are we afraid what God will do? Fear it not, your God will do nothing against your good think not that he may forget you, it cannot be; sooner may a tender mother forget her sucking child, *Isai.* 49. 15. no, no, *He withdraweth not his eye from the Righteous, Job* 36. 7. His eyes are continually upon all the dangers and wants of your Souls and Bodies, there is not a danger or an enemy stirring against you, but his eye is upon it. 2 *Chron.* 16. 9.

Are you afraid he will forsake and cast you off? 'Tis true your sins have deserved he should

do

do so, but he hath secured you fully against that fear in his Covenant, *Jer.* 32. 40. *I will not turn away from them, to do them good* All your fears of Gods forgetting or forsaking you, spring out of your ignorance of the Covenant.

3. Are you afraid what you shall do? 'Tis usual for the people of God to purpose difficult cases to themselves, and put startling questions to their own hearts; and there may be an excellent use of them, to rouze them out of security, put them upon the search and tryal of their conditions and estates, and make preparation for the worst; but Satan usually improves it to a quite contrary end, to deject, affright, and discourage them. O if fiery trials should come, if my liberty and life come once to be toucht in earnest, I fear I shall never have strength to go on a stept farther in the way of Religion: I am afraid I shall faint in the first encounter, I shall deny the words of the Holy One, make shipwrack of Faith and a good Conscience in the first gust of temptation. I can hear, and pray, and profess; but I doubt I cannot burn, or bleed, or lie in a dungeon for Christ. If I can scarce run with footmen in the land of peace, how do I think to contend with Horses in the swellings of *Jordan*?

But yet all these are but groundless fears, either forged in thy own misgiving heart, or secretly shuffled by Satan into it; for God hath abundantly secured thee against fear in this very particular; by that most sweet supporting and blessed promise, annexed to the former, in the same

same Text, *Jer.* 32. 40. *I will put my fear into their hearts, and that they shall not depart from me.* Here is another kind of Fear, than that which so startles the promises to be put into thy heart, not a fear to shake and undermine thy assurance as this doth, but to guard and maintain it. And this is the fear that shall be enabled to vanquish and expel all thy other fears.

4. Or are you afraid what the Church shall do? And what will become of the *Ark* of God? Do you see a storm gathering, the winds begin to roar, the waves to swell; and are you afraid what will become of that vessel, the Church, in which you have so great an interest?

It is an argument of the publicknes and excellency of thy spirit, to be thus touched with the feeling sense of the Churches sufferings, and dangers. Most men seek their own things; and not the things that are of Christ, *Phil.* 2. 21. But yet it is your sin so to fear as to sink and faint under a spirit of dispondency, and discouragement, which yet many good men (*Ep. ad Mel. anno.* 1549.) are but too apt to do. I remember an excellent passage in a Letter of *Luther's* to *Melancthon* upon this very account. *In private troubles, saith he, I am weaker; and thou art stronger, thou dispisest thy own life, but feareſt the publick cause; but for the publick I am at rest, being assured that the cause is just and true; yea, that it is Christ's and Gods cause. I am well nigh a secure spectator of things, and esteem not any thing these fierce and threatning Papists. I beseech thee by Christ, neglect not so Divine promises and* conso-

conſolations where the Scripture ſaith, caſt thy care upon the Lord, wait upon the Lord, be ſtrong, and he ſhall comfort thy heart. And *Anno* 1530. *in another* Epiſtle, *I much diſlike thoſe anxious cares, which as thou writeſt do almoſt conſume thee: 'Tis not the greatneſs of the danger, but the greatneſs of thy unbelief.* John Hus *and others were under greater danger than we; and if it be great, he is great that orders it. Why do you afflict your ſelf? If the cauſe be bad, let us renounce it; if it be good, why do we make him a liar that bids us be ſtill? And if you were able to do any good, by ſuch unprofitable cares. I beſeech thee, thou that in other things art valiant, fight againſt thy ſelf, thine own greateſt enemy that puts weapons into Satans hand.*

You ſee how good men may be even overwhelmed with publick fears, but certainly if we did well conſider the *bond of the Covenant that is betwixt, God and his people*, we ſhould be more quiet and compoſed. For by reaſon thereof it is, 1. That God is in the midſt of them, *Pſal.* 46. 1, 2, 3, 4. When any great danger threatned the Reformed Church in its tender beginnings in *Luther's* time, he would ſay, come, let us ſing the 46 *Pſalm* and indeed *it is a lovely ſong for ſuch times, it bears the Tittle of a ſong upon Alamoth, or a ſong for the hidden ones.* God is with them to cover them under his wings, &c. And it is plain matter of Fact evident to all the world, that no people under the heavens have been ſo long, and ſo *Wonderfully* preſerved as the *Church* hath been, It hath over lived many *bloody Maſ-*

ſacres,

Maſſacres, terrible perſecutions, ſubtle and cruel enemies; ſtill God hath preſerved and delivered it, for his promiſes oblige him to it, amongſt which thoſe two are ſignal and eminent ones. *Jer.* 30. 11. *Iſa.* 27. 3. 3. And it is obvious to all that will conſider things, that there are the ſelf ſame motives in God, and the ſelf ſame grounds and reaſons before him, to take care of his Church and people that ever were in him, or did ever lie before him from the beginning of the world. For, (1.) the relation is ſtill the ſame: What though *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*, thoſe renowned believers be in their Graves, and thoſe that ſucceed be far inferiour to them in Grace & Spiritual excellency; yet ſaith the Church, *Doubtleſs thou art our Father.* There is the ſame tie and bond betwixt the father & the youngeſt, weakeſt child in the family, as the eldeſt and ſtrongeſt. 2. His pity and mercy is ſtill the ſame, for that endures for ever: His bowels yern as tenderly over his people in their preſent, as ever they did in any paſt afflictions or ſtreights. 3. The rage and malice of his and his peoples enemies, is ſtill the ſame, they will reflect as blaſphemouſly and diſhonourably upon God now, ſhould he give up his people, as ever they did. *Moſes* Argument is as good now as ever it was, what will the *Egyptians* ſay? and ſo is *Joſhuah's* too, *What wilt thou do unto thy great name?* O if theſe things were more throughly ſtudied and believed, they would appeaſe many Fears.

2. Rule.

Work upon your hearts the conſideration of the many

many miſchiefs and miſeries men draw upon themſelves and others, both in this world and that to come, by their own ſinful fears.

1. The miſeries and calamities that ſinful fear brings upon men in this world, are unſpeakable; this is it that hath plunged the Conſciences of ſo many poor wretches into ſuch deep diſtreſſes! this it is that hath put them upon the *Rack*, and made them roar like men in Hell, among the damned. Some have been recovered, and others have periſhed in theſe deeps of horror and diſpair. In the year 1550. there was at *Ferrara* in *Italy*, one *Faninus* who by reading good Books was by the grace of God converted to the knowledge of the truth, wherein he found ſuch ſweetneſs, that by conſtant reading, meditation and prayer, he grew ſo expert in the Scriptures, that he was able to inſtruct others; and though he durſt not go out of the bond of his calling to preach openly, yet by conference and private exhortations he did good to many. This coming to the knowledge of the *Pop*'s Clients, they apprehended and committed him to priſon: where he renounced the truth, and was thereupon releaſed: But it was not long before the Lord met with him for it: So as falling into horrible torments of Conſcience, he was near unto utter deſpair, nor could he be freed from thoſe terrors, before he had fully reſolved to venture his life more faithfully in the ſervice of Chriſt.

Clerks examp. p. 27.

Dreadful was that voice that *Spira* ſeemed to hear

hear in his own Conscience, as soon as ever his sinful fears had prevailed upon him to renounce the truth. *Thou wicked wretch, thou hast denyed me, thou hast renounced the Covenant of thine obedience, thou hast broken thy Vow, hence Apostate, bear with thee the sentence of thine eternal damnation.* Presently he falls into a sound, quaking and trembling, & still affirmed to his death, that from that time, he never found any ease or peace in his mind; but professed that he was captivated under the revenging hand of the Almighty God, and that he continually heard the sentence of Christ, the just Judge against him, and that he knew he was utterly undone, and could neither hope for grace, or that Christ should intercede for him to the Father.

In our dreadful *Marian* days, Sir *John Cheek* who had been Tutor to King *Edward* the Sixth, was cast into the *Tower*, and kept close Prisoner; and there put to this miserable choice, either to forego his life, or that which was more precious, his liberty of conscience, neither could his liberty be procured by his great friends at any lower rate, than to recant his Religion; this he was very unwilling to accept of, till his hard imprisonment, joyned with threats of much worse in case of his refusal, at last wrought so upon him whilst he consulted with flesh and blood, as drew from him an *Abrenunciation* of that truth which he had so long professed, and still believed. Upon this he was restored to his liberty, but never to his comfort; for the sense of his own Apostacy, and they daily sight of the

cruel

cruel butcheries exercised upon others for their constant adherence to the truth, made such deep impressions upon his broken spirit, as brought him to a speedy end of his life, yet not without some comfortable hopes at last.

Our own Histories abound with multitudes of such doleful examples.

Some have been in such horrour of conscience, that they have chosen strangling rather than life they have felt that anguish of Conscience that hath put them upon desperate resolutions and attempts against their own lives to rid themselves of it. This was the case of *Peter Moon*, who being driven by his own fears to deny the truth, presently fell into such horrour of Conscience, that seeing a sword hanging in his Parlour, would have sheathed it in his own bowels. So *Francis Spira*, before mentioned, when he was near his end, saw a knife on the Table, and running to it would have mischieved himself, had not his friends prevented him; thereupon he said, *O that I were above God, for I know that he will have no mercy on me. He lay about eight weeks* (saith the Historian) *in a continual burning, neither desiring, nor receiving any thing but by force, and that without digestion; till he became as an Anatomy, vehemently raging for drink, yet fearful to live long, dreadful of hell, yet coveting death, in continual torment, yet his own Tormentor; and thus consuming himself with grief and horror, impatience and dispair, like a living man in hell, he represented an extraordinary example of Gods justice and power, and so ended his miserable life.*

Surely

Surely it were good to fright our selves by such dreadful examples, out of our sinful fears; is any misery we can fear from the hands of men like this? O Reader, believe it, it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of God: Hadst thou ever felt the rage and efficacy of a wounded and distressed conscience, as these poor wretches felt it, no fears or threats of men should drive thee into such an hell upon earth as this is.

2. And yet thought this be a doleful case, it is not the worst case your own sinful fears will cast you into, except the Lord overcome and extinguished them in you by the fear of his name, they will not only bring you into a kind of hell upon earth, but into hell it self for evermore: For so the Righteous God hath said in his word of truth, *Rev.* 21 8. *But the fearful and unbelieving, &c. Shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.* Behold here the Marshal Law of Heaven, executed upon Cowards and Renegadoes, whose fears make them revolt from Christ in the time of danger. Think upon this you timorous and faint hearted professors; you cannot bear the thoughts of lying in a nesty Dungeon, how will you lie then in the lake of fire and brimstone: You are afraid of the face and frowns of a man that shall die, but how will you live among devils? Is the *wrath of man*, like the *fury of God* poured out? Is not the *little finger of God* heavier than the loyns of all the *Tyrants in the world?* Remember what Christ hath said, *Matth.* 10. 33. *But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my father which is in hea-*

ven. Reader, The time is coming when he that ſpake theſe words ſhall break out of Heaven with a ſhout, accompanied with myriads of Angels, and ten thouſands of his Saints, the Heavens and the Earth ſhall be in dreadful conflagrations round about him: The laſt Trump ſhall ſound, the Graves ſhall open, the Earth and Sea ſhall give up the dead that are in them. Thine eyes ſhall ſee him aſcend the aweful throne of judgement, his faithful Ones that feared not to own and appear for him in the face of all enemies and dangers, ſitting on the bench as Aſſeſſors with him; and then to be diſclaimed and renounced for ever by Jeſus Chriſt in the face of that great aſſembly, and proclaimed a delinquent, a Traitor to him, that deniedſt his name; and truths, becauſe of the frowns of a fellow creature long ſince withered as the graſs: O how wilt thou be able to endure this! now put both theſe together in thy ſerious conſideration, think on the terrours of Conſcience here, and the deſperate horror of it in Hell; this as a perboiling, that as a roaſting in the flames of Gods inſufferable wrath: Theſe as ſome ſcalding drops ſprinkled beforehand upon thy Conſcience, that tender and ſenſible part of man; that as the lake burning for ever with fire and brimſtone. O who would ſuffer himſelf to be driven into all this miſery, by the fears of thoſe ſufferings which can but touch the fleſh, and for their duration, they are but for a moment.

Think, and think again upon thoſe words of Chriſt, *Mark.* 8. 35. *He that will ſave his life*

ſhall

shall lose it. It may be a prolonging of a miserable life, a life worse than death, even in thine own account; a life without the comfort or joy of life, a life ending in the second death, and all this for fear of a trifle compared with what thou shalt afterwards feel in thine own Conscience, and less than a trifle, nothing compared with what thou must suffer from God for ever.

3. *Rule.*

He that will overcome his fears of sufferings, must foresee and provide beforehand for them.

The fear of *Caution*, is a good cure to the fear of Distraction, the more of that, the less of this; this fear will cure that, as one fire draws forth another, *Heb.* 11.7. *Noah being moved with fear, prepared an Ark.* In which he provided as much for the rest and quiet of his mind, as he did for the safety of his person and family. That which makes evils so frightful as they are, is their coming by way of surprize upon us. Those troubles that find us secure, do leave us distracted and desperate. Presumption of continued tranquillity, proves one of the greatest aggravations of misery. Troubles will lie heavy enough when it comes by way of expectation, it is intolerable when it comes quite contrary to expectation. It will be the Lot of *Babylon* to suffer the unexpected Vials of Gods wrath, and I wish none but she & her children may be so surprized, *Rev.* 18.7. O it were well for us, if in the midst of our pleasant enjoyments we would be putting the difficultest cases to our selves, and mingle a few such thoughts as these with all our

earthly

earthly enjoyments, and comforts.

I am now at eaſe in the midſt of my habitation, but the time may be at hand, when my habitation ſhall be in a priſon, I ſee no faces at *preſent* but thoſe of *friends*, full of ſmiles and honours, I may ſee none ſhortly but the faces of enemies full of frowns and terrors. I have now an eſtate to ſupply my wants, and provide for my family, but by this may ſhortly fall as a prey to the enemy, they may ſweep away all that I have gathered, reap the fruits of all my labours, ------ *Impius has ſegetes.* I have yet my life given me for a prey; but O how ſoon may it fall into cruel and blood-thirſty hands? I have no better ſecurity for theſe things than the *Martyrs* had who ſuffered the loſſe of all theſe things for Chriſts ſake; a double advantage would reſult to us from ſuch meditations as theſe, *viz.* The Advantage,

1. Of Acquaintance with
2. Of Preparation for

} Troubles.

1. Hereby our thoughts would be better acquainted, with theſe evils, and the more they are acquainted, the leſs they will ſtart and fright at them: We ſhould not think it ſtrang concerning the fiery tryal, as it is 1 *Pet.* 4.12. It is with our thoughts, as it is with young colts, and ſo they ſtart at every new thing they meet, but we cure them of it, by bringing them home to that they ſtart at, and making them ſmell to it; better acquaintance cures this ſtartling humour at them. The newneſs of evil, ſaith a late grave and learned Divine, is the cauſe of fear, when the

the mind it self hath had no preceeding encounter with it, whereby to judge of its strength nor example of another mans prosperous issue, to confirm its hope in the like success: For, as I noted before out of the *Philosophers* experience is in stead of armour, and is a kind of fortitude, enabling both to judge, and to bear troubles; for there are some things which are μορμολύκεια καὶ προσωπεία, scare crows and vizors which children fear, only out of ignorance; assoon as they are known they cease to be terrible. Dr. *Edw. Reynolds.* *Epictet.*

I know our minds naturally reluctate, and decline such harsh and unpleasant subjects: 'Tis hard to bring our thoughts to them in good earnest, and harder to dwell so long as is necessary to this end upon them we had rather take a pleasant prospect of future felicity and prosperity in this world; of multiplying our days as the sand, and at last dying quietly in our Nest, as *Job* speaks. Our thoughts run nimbly upon such pleasant fancies like oyled wheels, and have need of rigging, but when they come into the deep and dirty wayes of suffering, there they drive heavily like *Pharoahs* Chariots, dismounted from their wheels. But that which is most pleasant, is not alwayes most useful and necessary; Our Lord was well acquainted with griefs, though our thoughts be such great strangers to them, he often thought and spake of his sufferings, and of the bloody Baptism, with which he was to be baptized, *Luke* 12.50. and he not only

minded his own ſufferings before hand, but when he perceived the fond imaginations, & vain fancies of ſome that followed and profeſſed him, deluding them with expectations of earthly proſperity and reſt; he gave their thoughts a turn to this leſs pleaſing, but more needful ſubject, the things they were to ſuffer for his name, in ſtead of anſwering a fooliſh and groundleſs queſtion, of ſitting on his Right and Left hand, like earthly *Grandees*, he rebukes the folly of the *Queſtioniſt*, and asks a leſs pleaſing queſtion, *Matth.* 20. 22. *But Jeſus anſwered and ſaid, ye know not what ye ask, are ye able to drink of the cup that I ſhal drink of? And to be baptized with the baptiſm that I ſhal be baptized with?* q. d. You do but abuſe your ſelves with ſuch fond and idle dreams, there is other imployments cut out for you in the purpoſe of God; In ſtead of ſitting upon Thrones and Tribunals, it would become you to think of being brought before them as priſoners to receive your doom and ſentence to die for my ſake; theſe thoughts would do you a great deel more ſervice.

2. As ſuch meditations would acquaint us better, ſo they would prepare us better to encounter troubles and difficult things when they come. Readineſs and preparations would ſubdue and baniſh our fears. we are never much ſcared with that for which our minds are prepared. There is the ſame difference in this caſe, as there is betwixt a Souldier in compleat Armour, and ready at every point for his enemy; and one that is allarm'd in his bed, who hath laid his

his cloaths in one place, and his Arms in another, when his enemy is breaking open his chamber door upon him. It was not therefore without the most weighty reason, that the Apostle presses us so earnestly, *Eph.* 6. 13. 14 *Take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand. Standfast therefore having your loyns girt about with truth, and having on the breast plate of Righteousness, and your feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace.* We see the benefit of such previous and provisions for sufferings in that great example of courage and constancy, *Acts* 21. 13. *I am ready* (saith Paul) *not only to be bound, but to die at Jerusalem.* And the same courage and constancy remained in him, when he was entering the very Lists, and going to lay his very neck upon the block. 2 *Tim.* 4 6. *I am ready to be offered up, and the time of my departure is at hand.* The word *spendomai* properly signifies a *libation* or drink offering, wherein some conceive he alluded to the very kind of his own death, *viz.* by the Sword: His heart was brought to that frame, that he could with as much willingness pour out his blood for Christ, as the Priests used to pour out the drink offering to the Lord. 'Tis true, all the meditations and preparations in the world made by us, are not sufficient in themselves to carry us through such difficult services, 'tis one thing to see death as our fancy limnes it out at a distance, and another thing to look death it self in the face. We can behold the painted Lyon without fear, but

the living Lyon makes us tremble; but yet though our suffering strength comes not from our own preparations or fore-thoughts of Death; but from Gods gracious assistance, usually that assistance of his is communicated to us, in and by the conscionable and humble use of these means; let us therefore be found waiting upon God for strength, patience, and resolutions to suffer as it becomes Christians, in the dayly serious use of those means whereby he is pleased to communicate to his people.

4. *Rule.*

If ever you will subdue your own slavish fears, commit your selves, and all that is yours into the hands of God by Faith.

This Rule is fully confirmed by that Scripture *Prov.* 16. 3. *Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established.* The greatest part of our trouble and burden in times of danger, arises from the unsetledness and distraction of our own thoughts, and the way to calm and quiet our thoughts, is to commit all to God. This rule is to be applyed for this end and purpose, when we are going to meet death it self, and that in all its terrible formalities, and most frightful appearance, Pet 4.19. *Let them that suffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.* And if this committing act of Faith be so useful at such a time, when the thoughts must be supposed to be in the greatest hurry, and fears in their full strength; much more will it establish the heart, and calm its passions

in

in leſſer troubles, you know what eaſe and relief it would be to you, if you had a Tryal depending in Law for your Eſtates, and your hearts were overloaded and diſtracted with cares and fears about the iſſue of it: if one whom you know to be very skilful and faithful, and ſhould ſay to you at ſuch a time, trouble not your ſelf any further about this buſineſs, never break an hours ſleep more for this matter; be you as an unconcerned Spectator, commit it to me, and truſt me with the management of it; I will make it my concernment, & ſave you harmleſs. O what a burden, what an heavy load would you feel your ſelves eaſed of, aſſoon as you had this transferred, and committed to ſuch an hand! then you would be able to eat with pleaſure, and ſleep in quietneſs? Much more eaſe and quietneſs doth your committing the matter of your fears to God, give even ſo much more, as his power, wiſdom, and faithfulneſs is greater than what is to be found in men. But to make this Rule practicable, and improveable to peace, and quietneſs of heart in an evil day, it will be neceſſary that you well underſtand.

1. What the committing Act of Faith is. 2. What grounds and encouragements Believers have for it.

1. Study well the nature of this committing act of Faith, and what it ſuppoſes or implyes in it, for all men cannot commit themſelves to God, 'tis his own people only that can do it; nor is it everything they can commit to God, they cannot commit themſelves to his care and pro-

rection in any way, but only in his own wayes, Know more particularly,

1. That he who will commit himself to God, must commit himself to him in well doing, as the *Apostle* limits it in 1 *Pet.* 4. 19. And in things agreeable to his will; else we would make God a patron and protector of our sins, *Let them that suffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their Souls to him in well doing.* We cannot commit our sins, but our duties to Gods protection, God is so great a friend to truth and righteousness, that in such a case he will not take your part, how dear soever you be to him, if truth be found on your enemies part, and the mistake on yours. Think not to entitle God to your errors or failings, much less to any sinful designes: You may commit a doubtful case to him to be decided, but not a sinful case to be protected. It is in vain to shelter any cause of your own under his wings, except you can write upon it as *David* did, *Psal.* 74. 22. *Thine own cause, O Lord, thine own as well as mine*, Lord plead thine own cause.

2. He that commits his *all* to God, supposes and firmly believes that all events and issues of things are in Gods hands; that he only can direct, over-rule, and order them all as he pleaseth. Upon this supposition, the committing acts of Faith in all our fears and distresses are built, *I trusted in thee, O Lord, I said, thou art my God, my times are in thy hand, deliver me from the hands of my enemies, and from them that persecute me.* His affirm assent to this great truth, that his times were in Gods hands, was the reason why

he committed himself into that hand. If our times, our lives, or comforts were in our enemies hands, it were to little purpose for us to commit our selves into Gods hands. And here the contrary senses and methods of Faith and unbelief are as conspicuous as in any one thing whatsoever: Unbelief perswades men that their lives and all that is dear to them, is in the hands of their enemies; and therefore perswades them the best way they can take to secure themselves, is by complyance with the will of their enemies, and pleasing them. But Faith determines quite contrary, it tells us, we and all that is ours is in Gods hand, and no enemy can touch us or ours till he give them a permission; and therefore it is our duty and interest to please him, and commit all to him.

3. The committing of our selves to God implies the resignation of our wills to the will of God, to be disposed of as seems good in his eyes: So *David* commits to God the event of that sad and doubtful providence, which made him flie for his life from a strong conspiracy, 2 *Sam.* 15. 25. *And the King said unto Zadock, Carry back the Ark of God into the City; if I shall find favour in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again, and shew me both it and his habitation, but if he thus say, I have no delight in thee; behold here am I, let him do to me as seemeth good to him:* q. d. Lord, the conspiracy against my life is strong, the danger great, the issue exceeding doubtful: but I commit it all into thy hand, if *David* may yet be used in any further service for

his God; I shall see this City and thy lovely Temple again, but if not, I lie at thy foot to be disposed either for life or death, for the earthly or the heavenly *Jerusalem*, as seemeth best in thine eyes: This submission to divine pleasure is included in the committing act of Faith. Christian, what sayest thou to it? Is thy will content to go back, that the will of God may come on, and take place of it? It may be thou canst refer a difficult case to God, provided that he will determine and issue it according to thy desires, but in truth that is no submission or resignation at all, but a sinful limiting of and prescribing to God. It was an excellent reply that a choice Christian once made to another; when a beloved and only Child lay in a dangerous sickness at the point of death; a friend asked the mother what would you now desire of God in reference to your Child? Would you beg of him its life or death, in this extremity it is now in? The mother answered, I refer that to the will of God. But said her friend, if God would refer it to you, what would you chuse then? Why truely said she, if God would refer it to me. I would even refer it to God again.

This is the true committing of our selves, and our troublesome concerns to the Lord.

4. The committing act of Faith, implys our renouncing and disclaiming all confidence and trust in the arm of flesh, and an expectation of relief from God only: if we commit our selves to God, we must cease from man, *Isai.* 2. 22. To trust God in part, and the Creature in part, is

is to set one foot upon a Rock, and the other in a quick sand: Those acts of Faith that give the intire glory to God, give real relief and comfort to us.

2. Let us see what grounds and encouragements the people of God have to commit themselves and all the matters of their fear to God, and so enjoy the peace and comfort of a resigned will; and there are two sorts of encouragements before you, let the case be as difficult and frightful as it will; you may find sufficient encouragements in God, and somewhat from your selves, *viz.* your relation to him, and experiences of him.

1. In God there is all that your hearts can desire to encourage you to trust him over all, and commit all into his hands. For,

1. He is able to help and relieve you, let the case be never so bad, yet *let Israel hope in the Lord, for with the Lord is plenteous redemption*, *Psal.* 130 7, 8. Plenteous Redemption, (*i. e.*) all the stores of power, choice of methods, plenty of means, abundance of wayes to save his people, when they can see no way out of their troubles: Therefore hope *Israel* in *Jehovah*.

2. As his Power is Almighty, so his wisdom is Infinite and unsearchable, *He is a God of judgement, blessed are all they that wait for him*, *Isaiah* 30 18. When the Apostle *Peter* had related the wonderful preservations of *Noah* in the Deluge, and of *Lot* in *Sodom*; one in a general destruction of the world by water, and the other in the overthrow of these Cities by fire, He concludes

and so should we, *The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation*, 2 *Pet.* 2. 9 Some men have much power, but little wisdom to manage it, others are wise and prudent, but want ability; in God there is an infinite fulness of both.

3. His love to and tenderness over his people is transcendent, and unparallelled; and this sets his wisdom and power both a work for their good, hence it is that his eyes of providence run continually throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose hearts are perfect (*i. e.*) upright towards him. 2. *Chron.* 16. 9. Thus you see how he is every way fitted as a proper object of your trust.

2. Consider your selves and you shal find encouragements to commit all to God. For,

1. You are his children, and to whom should children commit themselves in dangers and fears but to their own father? *Doubtless thou art our father*, saith the distressed Church, *Isai.* 63. 15. 16. Yea, Christian, *Thy maker is thy husband*, *Isaiah* 54. 5. Is not that a sufficient ground to cast thy self upon him? What, a Child not trust its own Father? A wife not commit her self to her own husband?

2. You have trusted him with a far greater concern already than your estates, liberties, or lives; you have committed your souls to him, and your eternal interests, 2 *Tim.* 1. 12. Shall we commit the Jewel, and dispute the Cabinet? Trust him for heaven, and doubt him for earth?

3. You have ever found him faithful in all that

that you trusted him with, all your experiences are so many good grounds of confidence, *Psal.* 9. 10. Well then, resolve to trust God over all, and quietly leave the dispose of every thing to him: he hath been with you in all former streights wants, and fears, hitherto he hath helped you, and cannot he do so again; except you tell him how? O trust in his wisdom, power, and love, and lean not to your own understandings. The fruit of Resignation will be peace.

5. *Rule.*

If ever you will get rid of your fears and distractions, get your affections mortified to the world, and to the inordinate and immoderate love of every enjoyment in the world.

The more you are mortified, the less you will be terrified; 'tis not the dead, but the living world, that puts our hearts into such fears and tremblings: If our hearts were once crucified, they would soon be quieted. 'Tis the strength of our *affections* that puts so much strength into our *afflictions*. It was not therefore without great reason that the Apostle compares the life of a Christian to the life of a Souldier, who if he mean to follow the Camp, and acquit himself bravely in fight, must not *intangle himself with the affairs of this life*, 2 *Tim.* 2. 4. Sure there is no following Christs Camp, but with a disintangled heart from the world, for proportionable to the *heat of our love* will be the strength and height of our fears about these things: more particularly, If every you will rid your selves of your uncomfortable and uncomely fears, use all

Gods

Gods means to mortifie your affections to the exorbitant esteem and love of,

1. Your Estates. 2. Your Liberty. 3. Your Lives.

1. Get mortified and cooled hearts to your Possessions and Estates in the world. The poorest age afforded the richest Christians, and noblest Martyrs. Ships deepest laden are not best for encounters. The believing Hebrews *took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, knowing in themselves that they had in heaven a better and enduring substance, Heb.*10.34. they carried it rather like unconcerned *Spectators*, then they true *Proprietars*: They rejoyced when rude Souldiers carried out their goods, as if so many friends had been bringing them in: And whence was this? But from an heart fixed upon heaven, and mortified to things on earth. Doubtless they esteemed and valued their Estates as the good providence of God, for their more comfortable accommodation in this world; but it seems they did, and O that we could look upon them as mercies of the lowest and meanest rank and nature. The substance laid up in heaven was a better substance, and as long as that was safe, the loss of this did not afflict them.

They could bless God for these things which for a little time did minister refreshment to them, but they knew them to be transitory enjoyments things that would make to themselves wings & flee away, if their enemies had not toucht them; but the substance laid up for them in Heaven, that was an *enduring substance*: So far as those earthly

earthly things might further them towards heavenly things, so far they prized and valued them, but if Satan would turn them into snares and temptations to deprive them of their better substance in heaven, they could easily slight them, and take the spoiling of them joyfully: In a stress of weather when the Ship is ready to sink and founder in a storm, all hands are readily imployed to throw the richest goods overboard. No man saith it's pity to cast them away, but reason dictates to a man in that case, better these perish, than I perish with and for them, These be the wares that some will not cast over board, and therefore they are said to drown men in perdition, 1 *Tim.* 6 9. *Demas* would rather perish than part with these things. 2 *Tim.* 4. 10. But Reader, consider seriously what comfort they can yeeld thee, when thou must look upon them as the price for which thou hast sold Heaven, and all the hopes of glory; even as much as the price of blood yeelded *Judas*: and so they will ensnare thee if thy unmortified heart be overheated with the love of them as his was:

2. Be mortified to your liberty, and take heed of placing too great an esteem upon it, or necessity in it. Liberty is a desirable thing to the very birds of the Air, accommodate them the best you can in your cages, feed them with the richest fare, they had rather be cold and hungry with their liberty in the woods, than fat and warm in your houses. But yet as sweet as it is, there may be more sweetness and comfort in parting with it, that in keeping it, as the case may stand. The

doors

doors of a prison can lock you in, but they cannot lock the comforter out. *Paul* and *Silas* lost their liberty for Christ, but not their comfort with it? they never were so truly at liberty as when their feet were made fast in the stocks? they never fared so deliciously, as when they fed upon prisoners fare. God spread a Table for them in the prison, sent them in a rich feast, yea and they had musick at their feast too, and that at midnight, *Act.* 16 25.

Rev. 1. 9, 10. *Patmos* was a barren Island, and a Place designed for banished persons; it lay in the *Ægean* Sea, not far from the coast of the Lesser *Asia*: it was inhabited by none because of the exceeding barrenness of it, but such who were appointed to it for their punishment? so that here *John* could meet with no more earthly refreshment, than what the barren rocks, or wild and desperate persons condemned to live upon it, could afford: Ay, but there it was that Christ appeared to him in unexpressible glory? there it was that he had those ravishing visions, and saw the whole Scheme of Providence in the Government of this world there he saw the *New Jerusalem* coming down from God out of heaven, as a bride prepared for her husband? This made a *Patmos* become a *Paradice:* never did any place afford him such comfort as this did, So that Christians may not think there is so strict and necessary a connection betwixt Liberty and Comfort, that he that takes away the first, must needs deprive them of the other.

Again,

Again, Suppoſe we ſhould be ſo fond of our Liberty as to exchange truth and a good Conſcience for it; cannot God ſo imbitter it to you, yea, hath he not ſo imbittered it to many, that they were quickly weary of it, and glad of an opportunity to exchange it for a priſon. Our own *Martyrology* furniſhes us with many ſad examples of it: O what will you do with your bitter dear bought liberty, when peace is taken away from the inner man? When God ſhall clap up your ſouls in priſon, and put your Conſciences into his bonds and fetters? Then you will ſay as the Martyr did, *I am in priſon till I be in priſon.*

3. Be mortified to the inordinate and fond love of life, as ever you expect relief againſt the fears of death. Reaſon thy ſelf into a lower value of thy life. Methinks you have arguments enough to cure your fondneſs in this point: Have you found it ſuch a pleaſant life to you, for ſo much of it as is paſt; you know how the Apoſtle repreſents it, 2 *Cor.* 5. 4. *We that are in this Tabernacle do groan being burthened.* And it is a burthened and a groaning life ſo deſirable? You know alſo as he ſpeaks in the next *verſe*, that whilſt you are at home in the body, you are abſent from the Lord; and is a ſtate of abſence from Jeſus Chriſt ſo deſireable to a ſoul that loves him; Can you find much pleaſure ſo far from home; You may fancy What you will, but upon ſerious recollection you will be able to tell your ſelves, that till you be dead, you will never be out of the reach of Satans temptations, never

freed

freed from your own indwelling corruptions, these conflicts cannot have an end till life be ended. You also stand convinced that till you be dead, Your Souls cannot be satisfied, nor your desires be at rest, have what comforts soever from God in the way of Faith, and course of duties your heart are still off the center, and will still gravitate and gasp Heavenward. You also know that die you must, and the time of your departure is at hand, and of all deaths, if you might have your choice, none is more honourable to God, or like to be so evidential and comfortable to you as a violent death for Christ; therein you come to him by consent and choice, not by necessity and constraint therein you give a publick testimony for Christ, which is the highest use that ever our blood can be put to, or honoured by; and for the pain and torment, as the Martyr said, *He that takes away from my torment, takes away from my reward.* But even in that point, God can make it easier to you than a natural death would be; he will be with you in your extremity, and administer such reviving cordials as other men must not look to taste, at least not ordinarly; they being prepared and reserved for such, against such an hour.

O then, work out the inordinate love of life by working in such mortifying considerations upon your own hearts, and if once you gain but this point, you will quickly find all your pains and prayers richly answered in the ease and rest of your hearts, in the most scaring and frightful times.

6. Rule.

6. *Rule.*

Eye the encouraging examples of those that have trod the path of sufferings before you, and strive to imitate such worthy Patrons.

Behold the cloud of witnesses encompassing you round about; and a cloud like that over the *Israelites* to direct you: yea, a cloud for multitude of excellent persons to animate and encourage you, *Heb.* 12. 1. *O take them for an example in suffering affliction, and patience, James* 5. 10. Examples of excellent persons, that have broken the ice, and beaten the path before us, are of excellent use to suppress our fears, and rouse our courage in our own encounters.

The first sufferers had the hardest task, they that first entered the lists for Christ, wanted those helps to suppress fear which they have left unto us. Strange and untried torments are most terrible, for *magnitudinem rerum consuetudo subducit*, trial and acquaintance abates the formidable greatness of evils, they knew not the strength of that enemy they were to engage, but we fight with an enemy that hath been often beaten and triumph'd over by our *brethren* that went before us: Certainly we that live in the last times, have the best helps that ever any had to subdue their fears; we have heard of the courage and constancy of our brethren, in as sharp trials of their courage as ever we can be called to: we have read with what Christian gallantry they have triumphed over all sorts of sufferings and torments, how they have been strengthned with all might in the inner man unto all patience, and

long

long ſuffering, with joyfulneſs, 1 *Col.* 11. How they have gone away from the Courts that cenſured and puniſhed them, rejoycing that they were honoured to be diſhonoured for Chriſt, as the ſtrict reading of that Text is, *Act.* 5. 41. counting the reproaches of Chriſt greater riches than the treaſures of *Egypt*, *Heb.* 11. 26. which at that time was the Magazine of the world for Riches: You read what *Trials they have had of cruel mo kings, yea, moreover of bonds and impriſonments, how they were ſtoned ſawn aſunder, tempted, ſlain with the ſword, wandred about in Sheeps skins, and Goat skins, deſtitute, afflicted, tormented, Heb.* 11. 36. 37. In all which they obtained a good report, they came out of the field with triumphant faith and patience; and this was not the effect of an over-heated zeal at the firſt outſet, but the ſame ſpirit of courage was found among Chriſtians in after ages, who have put off their proſecutors with a kind of pleaſant ſcorn and contempt of Torments.

ὅτι καὶ ξιῶ δέεσαν ατιμιαθῆναι.

So did *Baſil*, truly ſirnamed the great, when *Valens* the Emperour in a great rage threatned him with baniſhment, and tortures, as to the firſt, ſaid he, I little regard it, for the earth is the LORDS, and the fulneſs thereof: and as for tortures what can they do upon ſuch a poor thin body as mine, nothing but skin and bone? And at another time when *Euſebius* Governour of *Pontus* told him in

Socrat. Hiſt. l. 4. *Cap.* 26. *Theod. l.* 4. *Cap* 19.

in a great rage, he would tear his very liver out of his bowels: Truly ſaid *Baſil* you ſhal do me a very good turn in it, to take out my naughty liver; which inflames and diſeaſeth my whole body. Their enemies have profeſſed the Chriſtians put them to ſhame, by ſmiling at their cruelties and threatnings. *Ignatius* his love to Chriſt had ſo perfectly overcome all fears of ſufferings, that when he was going to be thrown for a prey among the Lyons and Leopards, he profeſſed he longed to be among them, and ſaid he, *if they will not diſpatch me the ſooner, I will provoke them, that I may be with my ſweet Jeſus.* And if we come down to latter ages we ſhall find as ſtout Champions for Chriſt. The courage and undauntedneſs of *Luther* is trumpeted abroad throughout the Chriſtian world, it would ſwell this ſmall *Tract* too much, but to note the moſt eminent inſtances of his courage for Chriſt: The laſt he gave was by his ſorrow in his laſt ſickneſs, that he muſt carry his blood to the grave. The like Heroick Spirit appeared in diverſe perſons of honour and eminency, who zealouſly eſpouſed the ſame cauſe of *reformation* with him. Remarkable to this purpoſe is that famous Epiſtle written by *Ulricus ab Hutten*, a *German* Knight, in defence of *Luther's* cauſe againſt the Cardinals and Biſhops aſſembled at *Worms*. *I will go through* (ſaid he) *with what I have undertaken againſt you, and, will ſtir up men to ſeek their freedom: Such as yeeld not to me at firſt, I will overcome with importunity; I neither care, nor fear what may befall me, being prepared*

for

for either event; either to ruine you, to the great benefit of my Countrey, or my self to fall with a good Conscience: Therefore, that you may see with what confidence I contemn your threats; I do professe my self to be your irreconcilable enemy, whilst ye persecute Luther, *and such as he is. No power of yours, no injury of fortune shall alter this mind in me; though you take away my life, yet this well deserving of mine towards my Countreys liberty, shall not die. I know that my endeavour to remove such as you are, and to place worthy Ministers in your room, is acceptable to God; and in the last judgement, I trust it will be safer for me to have offended you, than to have had your favour.*

It was also a brave Heroick Spirit by which *John* Duke of *Saxony* was acted to defend the Reformation, who despising all the favours and offers of the Court, and of *Rome*, and the terrors of Death it self; appeared as my Author speaks in its behalf against all the Devils, and the *Pope*, in three publick imperial assemblies, saying openly to their faces, I must serve GOD, or the World; and which of these two do ye think is the better? And assoon as *Luthers* Sermons were forbidden, he hasted away, saying, *I will not stay there where* I *cannot have my liberty to serve God.*

Spangenberg. ad an. 1531.

And now Reader, thou hast a little taste of the courage and zeal of those worthies who are gone before thee in defence of that cause for which thou feareſt to suffer. Most men, saith *Chrisostom*, that read to hear such examples, are like the Spectators

Spectators of the *Roman Gladiators*, who stood by and praised their courage, but durst not enter the Lists to undertake what they did. If ever thou wilt get the like courage for Christ, thus improve such famous examples.

1. Make use of them to obvitate the prejudice of singularity: you see you have store of good company, the same things you are like to suffer for Christ, have been accomplished in the rest of your brethren in the world, 1 *Pet.* 5 9.

2. Improve them against the prejudice of all that shame that attends sufferings, here you may see the most excellent persons in the world reckoning it their glory to suffer the vilest things for Jesus Christ. *Acts* 5. 41. *Heb.* 11. 26.

3. Improve them against the conceit of the insupportableness of sufferings. Lo here, poor weak creatures which have been carried honourably and comfortably through the cruellest and difficultest sufferings for Christ. Our Women and Children, not to speak to men (said *Tertullian*) overcome their Tormentors, and the fire cannot fetch so much as a sigh from them.

4. Improve them against thine own unbelief, and staggerings at the faithfulness of God in that promise, *Isa.* 43. 2. *When thou passest through the fire I will be with thee, &c.* Lo here you have the recorded and faithful testimonies of such as have tried it, with one voice witnessing for God, *Thy word is truth, thy word is truth.*

5. Improve them against the sensible weakness of your own grace, are you afraid your faith love, and patience are too weak to carry you through

through great trials? Why, doubtleſs ſo were many of them too, they were men of like fears, troubled with a bad heart, and a buſie devil as well as you, they alſo had their clouds & damps as you have; yet the Almighty power of God ſupported them; and out of weakneſs they were made ſtrong: Deſpond not therefore but get a judgment ſatisfied, *Pſal.* 44. 22. A Conſcience ſprinkled, 2 *Rom.* 1. 7. And a Call cleared, *Dan.* 6. 10. Exerciſe Faith alſo with reſpect to Divine aſſiſtances, and everlaſting rewards as they did; and doubt not but the ſame God that enabled them to finiſh their courſe with joy, will be as good to you as he was to them. Conſider, Chriſt hath done as much for you as he did for any of them, and deſerves as much from you as from any of them; and hath prepared the ſame glory for you, that he prepared for them: O that ſuch conſiderations might provoke you to ſhew as much courage and love to Chriſt, as any of them ever did.

7. *Rule.*

If ever you will get above the power of your own fears in a ſuffering day, make haſte to clear your intereſt in Chriſt, and your pardon in his blood before that evil day come.

The clearer this is, the bolder you will be? an aſſured Chriſtian was never know to be a coward in ſufferings: It is impoſſible to be clear of fears, till you are cleared of the doubts about intereſt in, and pardon by Chriſt. Nothing is found more ſtrengthening to our fears, than that which clouds our evidences? and nothing more

to

to quiet and cure our fears, than that which clears our evidences. The shedding abroad of Gods love in our hearts, will quickly fill them with a spirit of glorying in tribulations *Rom.* 5. 5. When the believing *Hebrews* once came to know in themselves that they had an enduring substance in heaven, they quickly found in themselves an unconcerned heart for the loss of their comforts on earth, *Heb.* 10. 34. And so should we too For,

1. Assurance satisfies a man that his treasure and true happiness is secured to him, and laid out of the reach of all his enemies; and so long as that is safe, he hath all the reason in the world to be quiet and chearful, *I know* (saith *Paul*) *in whom I have believed, and am perswaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day*, 2 *Tim* 1 12. And he gives this as the reason why he was not ashamed of Christs sufferings.

2. The assured Christian knows that if death it self come, (which is the worst men can inflict) he shall be no loser by the exchange; nay he shall make the best bargain that ever he made since he first parted with all in his afflictions, to follow Christ. There are two rich bargains a Christian makes; one is when he exchanges the World for Christ in his first choice at his conversion, in point of love and estimation: the other is when he actually parts with the world for Christ at his dissolution: both these are rich bargains, and upon this ground it was the Apostle said, *To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain,*

Phil.

Phil. 1. 21. The death of a believer in Christ, is gain unspeakable, but if a man would make the utmost gain by dying, he shall find it in dying for Christ, as well as in Christ: And to shew you wherein the gain of such a death lies, let a few particulars be weighted, wherein the gain will be cast up in both; he that is assured he dies in Christ, knows.

1. That his living time is his labouring time, but his dying time is his harvest time: whilst we live we are plowing and sowing in all the duties of Religion; but when we die, then we reap the fruit and comfort of all our labours and duties, *Gal.* 6 8. 9. As much therefore as the reaping time is better than the sowing and plowing time, so much better is the death than the life of a believer.

2. A Believers living time is his fighting time, but his dying time is his conquering and triumphing time, 1 *Cor.* 15. 55. 56. The conflict is sharp, but the triumph is sweet: and as much as victory and triumph is better than fighting, so much is death better than life, to him that dyeth in Jesus.

3. A believers living time is his tiresome and weary time, but his dying time is his resting and sleeping time, *Isai.* 57. 2. Here we spend and faint, there we rest in our beds, and as much as refreshing rest in sleep is better than tiring and and fainting: so much is a believers death better than his life.

4. A Believers living time is his waiting and longing time, but his time of dying is the time

of enjoying what he hath long wiſhed and waited for, *Phil.* 1. 23. Here we groan and ſigh for Chriſt, there we behold and enjoy Chriſt, and ſo much as viſion and fruition is better and ſweeter that hoping and waiting for it; ſo much is a believers death better than his life.

2. As the advantage a Believer makes of death is great to him by dying only in Chriſt; ſo it is much greater, and the richeſt improvement that can be made of death to die for Chriſt as well as in Chriſt: For compare them in a few particulars and you ſhall find.

1. That though a natural death hath *horrour*, yet a violent death for Chriſt hath more *horrour* in it. To him that dies united with Chriſt the grave is *a bed of reſt*; but to him that dies as a Martyr for Chriſt, the grave is a bed of honour, *To you* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *it is given in the behalf of Chriſt, not only to believe, but alſo to ſuffer for his ſake*, 1 *Phil.* 29. To you it is granted as a great honour and favour to ſuffer for Chriſt; all that live in Chriſt have not the honour to lay down their lives for Chriſt. It was the great trouble of *Ludovicus Marſacus*, a Knight of *France*, to be exempted becauſe of his dignity, from wearing his chain for Chriſt, as the other Priſoners did, and he reſented it, as a great injury, Give me (ſaith he to his Keeper) my chain as well as they, and create me a Knight of that noble Order.

Cur me non quoque torq; donas, & illuſtris illius ordinis militem non creas.

2. By a natural death we only ſubmit our ſelves

to the unavoidable consequence of sin, but in dying a violent death for Christ, we give our testimony against the evil of sin, and for the precious truths of Jesus Christ. The first is the payment of a debt of justice due by the fall of *Adam*; the second is the payment of a debt of thankfulness and obedience due to Christ, who redeemed us with his own blood. Thus we become witnesses for God, as well as sufferers upon the account of sin: In the first, sin witnesseth against us, in this we witnesse against it: And indeed it is a great testimony against the evil of sin: We declare to all the world that there is not so much evil in a Dungeon, in a bloody Axe, or consuming flames as there is in sin: That it is far better to lose our carnal friends, estates, liberties, and lives, than part with Christs truths & a good Conscience, as *Zuinglius* said, What sort of death should not a Christian chuse, what punishment should he not rather undergo; yea into what vault of hell should he not rather chuse to be cast, than to witnesse against truth and conscience.

Quas non oportet mortis præelegere, quod non supplicium potius ferre imo inquam profundum inferni Abyssum non intrare, quam contra conscientiam atteſtari?

3. A natural death in Christ may be as safe to our selves, but a violent death for Christ, will be more beneficial to others, by the former we shall come to heaven our selves, but by the latter we may bring many souls thither. The bl[illegible]

of the Martyrs is truely called the ſeed of the Church. Many waxed confident by *Pauls* bonds, his ſufferings fell out to the furtherance of the Goſpel, and ſo may ours: In this caſe a Chriſtian, like *Samſon*, doth greater ſervice againſt Satan and his cauſe, by his death, than by his life.

If we only die a natural death in our beds we die in poſſeſſion of the truths of Chriſt our ſelves, but if we die Martyrs for Chriſt, we ſecure that precious inheritance to the generations to come and thoſe that are yet unborn ſhall bleſs God, not only for his truths, but for our courag zeal, and conſtancy by which it was preſerved for them, and tranſmitted to them.

By all this you ſee that death to a believer is great gain, it's great gain if he only die in Chriſt, it's all that, and a great deal more added, if he alſo die for Chriſt: And he that is aſſured of ſuch advantages by death either way, muſt needs feel his fears of death ſhrink away before ſuch aſſurances; yea, he will rather have life in patience and death in deſire; he will not only ſubmit quietly, but rejoyce exceedingly to be uſed by God in ſuch honourable imployment. Aſſurance will call a bloody death a ſafe paſſage to *Canaan* through the Red-Sea. It will call *Satan* that inſtigats theſe his inſtruments, and all that are imployed in ſuch bloudy work by him, ſo many *Balaams* brought to curſe, but they do indeed bleſs the people of God, and not curſe them. The aſſured Chriſtian, looks upon his

potius mihi deliciæ quam tormenta ſunt. Baul.

death as his weeding day, *Rev.* 19.7 And therefore it doth not much differ whether the horse sent to fetch him to Christ be pale, or red, so he may be with Christ his love, as *Ignatius* call'd him.

He looks upon death as his day of enlargement out of prison, 2 *Cor* 5. 8. And it is not much odds what hand open the door, or whether a friend or enemy close his eyes, so he have his liberty, and may be with Christ.

O then, give the Lord no rest till your hearts be at rest by the assurance of his love, and the pardon of your sins, when you can boldly say, the *Lord is your help*, you will quickly say what immediatly follows, *I will not fear what man shal do unto me*, *Heb.* 13.6. And why, if thy heart be upright, mayest thou not attain it? Full assurance is possible, else it had not been put into the command, 2 *Pet.* 1. 10. The sealing graces are in you, the sealing spirit is ready to do it for you, the sealing promises belong to you; but we give not all diligence, and therefore go without the comfort of it: Would we pray more, and strive more, would we keep our hearts with a stricter watch, mortifie sin more throughly, and walk before God more accurately; how soon may we attain this blessed assurance, and in it, an excellent cure for our distracting and slavish fears.

8, *Rule.*

Let him that designs to free himself of distracting fears, be careful to maintain the purity of his conscience, and integrity of his wayes in the whole course

of

of his converſation in this world.

Uprightneſs will give us boldneſs, and purity will yield us peace, *Iſai.* 32. *The work of righteouſneſs ſhall be peace, and the effect of righteouſneſs, quietneſſe and aſſurance for ever.* Look as fear follows guilt and guile, ſo peace and quietneſſe follows righteouſneſs and ſincerity, *Prov.* 28 1. *The wicked flee when none purſueth, but the righteous are bold as a lyon.* His confidence is great, becauſe his Conſcience is quiet, the peace of God guards his heart and mind. There are three remarkable ſteps by which Chriſtians riſe to the hight of courage in tribulations, *Rom.* 5. 1, 2, 3, 4. Firſt they are juſtified and acquitted from guilt by faith, *v* 1. Then they are brought into a ſtate of favour and acceptation with God, *v.* 2. Thence they riſe one ſtep higher; even to a view of Heaven, and the glory to come, *v.* 3. And from thence they take an eaſie ſtep to glorying in tribulations, *v.* 4.

I ſay 'tis an eaſie ſtep, for let a man once obtain the pardon of ſin, the favour of God, and a believing view and proſpect of the glory to come, and it is ſo eaſie to triumph in tribulation, in ſuch a ſtation as that is, that it will be as hard to hinder it, as to hinder a man from laughing when he is tickled.

Chriſtians have always found it a ſpring of courage and comfort. 2 *Cor.* 1. 12. *This is our rejoycing, even the teſtimony of our Conſciences, that in all ſincerity and godly ſimplicity, not with fleshly wiſdom, but by the grace of God; we have had our converſation in this World.* Their hearts

did not reproach them with by-ends in Religion; their Conſciences witneſſed that they made not Religion a cloak to cover any fleſhly deſign, but were ſincere in what they profeſſed; and this enabled them to rejoyce in the midſt of ſufferings. An earthen veſſel ſet empty to the fire will crack and fly in pieces, and ſo will an hypocritical, formal, and meer nominal Chriſtian: but he that hath ſuch ſubſtantial and real principles of courage as theſe within him, will endure the tryal, and be never the worſe for the fire.

The very Heathens diſcovered the advantage of Moral integrity, and the peace it yielded to their natural Conſciences in times of trouble. *Nil conſcire tibi, nulla palleſcere culpa hic murus aheneus eſto*---- It was to them a wall of braſſe, much more will godly ſimplicity, and the ſprinkling of the blood of Chriſt upon our Conſciences, ſecure and encourage our hearts. This Atheiſtical Age laughs conſcience and purity to ſcorn, but let them laugh, this it will make thee laugh when they ſhall cry. *Paul* exercised himſelf, or made it his buſineſſe, *To have always conſcience void of offence, both towards God, and towards men, Acts* 24. 16. And it was richly worth his labour, it repayed him ten thouſand fold in the peace, courage, and comfort it gave him in all the troubles of his life, which were great and many.

ἀσκῶ meditor, operam do.

Conſcience muſt be the bearing ſhoulder on which the burden muſt lie, beware therefore it be not galled with guilt, or put out of joynt by any

any fall into ſin 'tis ſad bearing on ſuch a ſhoulder: In ſtead of bearing burdens, you will not be able to bear its pain and anguiſh. To Prevent this carefull; obſerve theſe rules,

1. Over-awe your hearts every day and in every place with the eye of God; this walking as before God will keep you upright, *Gen.* 17.1. If you ſo ſpeak and live as thoſe that know God ſees you, ſuch will be your uprightneſs, that you will not care if all the world ſee you too. An Artiſt came to *Druſius* and offered to build him an houſe ſo contrived, that he might do what he would within doors, and no man ſee him; nay ſaid *Druſius*, ſo build it that every one may ſee.

2. Do no action, undertake no deſign that you dare not preface by Prayer; this is your rule *Phil.* 4.6. Touch not with that you dare not pray for a bleſſing upon, if you dare not pray, dare not to engage: If you cannot ſend your prayers before, be confident ſhame and guilt will follow after.

3. Be more afraid of grieving God, or wounding Conſcience, than of diſpleaſing or loſing all the friends you have in the world beſides; look upon every adventure, upon ſin to eſcape danger, to be the ſame thing as if he would ſink the Ship to avoid one that you take to be a Pirate; or as the fatal miſtakes of two vials wherein there is poyſon and phyſick:

4. What counſel you would give another, that give your ſelves, when the caſe ſhall be your own; your judgement is moſt clear, when intereſt is leaſt felt; *Davids* judgement was very up-

upright, when he judged himself in a *remote parable.*

5. Be willing to bear the faithful reproofs of your faults from men, as the reproving voice of God, for they are no less when duly administred. This will be a good help to keep you upright, *Psal.* 135. 23, 24. *Let the righteous smite me, &c.* It is said of Sir *Anthony Cope*, that he shamed none so much as himself in his family prayers, and desired the Minister of his acquaintance not to favour his faults; but tell me, said he, and spare not.

6. Be mindful daily of your dying day, and your great Audit day, and do all with respect to them: Thus keep your integrity and peace, and that will keep out your fears and terrors.

9. *Rule.*

Carefully record the experiences of Gods care over you, and faithfulness to you in all your past dangers and distresses, and apply them to the cure of your present fears and despondencies.

Recorded experiences are excellent remedies *Exod.* 17. 14. *Write this for a memorial in a book, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshuah.* There were two things in that Record; the victory obtained over *Amalek*, and the way of obtaining it by incessant prayer: And there were two things to be done to secure this mercy for their use and benefit in future fears, it must be recorded and rehearsed, preserved from oblivion, and seasonably produced for relief.

There are two special assistances given us against fear by experience.

1. It

1. It abates the terror of Sufferings. 2. It aſſiſts Faith in the Promiſes.

1. Experience greatly abates the terror of ſufferings, and makes them leſs formidable and ſcaring than otherwiſe they would be, fear ſaith they, are deep waters, and will drown us; experience ſaith they, are much ſhallower than we think, and are ſafely fordable: Others have, and we may paſs through that Read-ſea, and not be overwhelmed. Fear ſaith the pains of death are unconceivable ſharp and bitter, the living little know what the dying feel; and to lie in a ſtinking Priſon in continual expectations of a cruel death is an unſupportable evil: Experience contradicts all theſe falſe reports which make our hearts faint, as the ſecond *Spies* did the daunting ſtories of the firſt; and aſſures us, priſons and death are not when we come home to them for Chriſt, what they ſeem and appear to be at a diſtance. O what a good report have thoſe faithful men given who have ſearched and tryed theſe things! who have gone down themſelves into the valley and ſhadow of death, and ſeen what there is in a Priſon, and in death it ſelf, ſo long as they were in ſight and hearing able by words or ſigns to contradict our falſe Notions of it. O what a ſweet account did *Pomponius Algerius* give of his ſtinking Priſon, at *Lyons* in *France*: During all his Letters whilſt he was there, *From the delectable Orchard of the* Leonine *Priſon*, And when carried to *Venice*, *in a Letter from the priſon there he writes thus to his Chriſtian friends*: *I ſhall utter that which ſcarce any will believe, I*

have found a neſt of honey in the entrails of a Lyon, a Paradiſe of pleaſure in a deep dark dungeon, in the place of ſorrow and death, tranquillity of hope, and life. O here it is, that the ſpirit of God, and of glory reſts upon us,

So bleſſed Mr. *Philpot* our own Martyr, in one of his ſweet encouraging Letters, *O how my heart leaps (ſaith he) that I am ſo near to eternal bliſs God forgive me my unthankfulneſs and unworthineſs of ſo great glory: I have ſo much joy of the reward prepared for me, the moſt wretched ſinner, that though I be in the place of darkneſs and mourning, yet I cannot lament, but am night and day ſo joyful as though I were under no croſs at all; in all the days of my life I was never ſo joyful, the name of the Lord be praiſed.*

Others have given the ſignals agreed upon betwixt them and their friends in the midſt of the flames, thereby to the laſt confirming this truth, that God makes the inſide of ſufferings quite another thing what the appearance and outſide of them is to ſenſe. Thus the experience of others abates the terrors of ſufferings to you; and all this is fully confirmed by the perſonaly experience you your ſelves have had of the ſupport and comforts of God, wherein ſoever you have conſcientiouſly ſuffered for his ſake

2. And this cannot but be a ſingular aſſiſtance to your faith, your own and others experiences; juſt like *Aaron* and *Hur*, ſtay up the hands of faith on the one ſide and the other that they hung not down, whilſt your fears like thoſe *Amalekites* fall before you. For what is experience, but

but the bringing down of the Divine promises to the taste of sense and feeling? It is our duty to believe the promises without tryal and experiments, but it is easier to do it after so many tryals; so that your own and other experiences carefully recorded and seasonably applyed; would be food to your faith, and a cure to many of your fears in a suffering day.

10. *Rule.*

You can never free your selves from sinful fears, till you throughly believe and consider Christs providential Kingdom over all the creatures and affairs in this lower world.

Poor timorous Soul, is there not a King, a Supream Lord under whom devils and men are? Hath not Christ the reins of Government in his hands? *Matth.* 28. 18. *Phil.* 2. 9, 10, 11. 12. *John* 17. 2 Were this dominion of Christ and dependence of all creatures on him well studied and believed, it would cut off both our trust in men, and our fear of men, we should soon discern they have no power either to *help* us, or to *hurt* us, but what they receive from above. Our enemies are apt to over-rate their own power in their pride, and we are as apt to over-rate it too in our fears. *Knowest thou not*, saith *Pilate* to Christ, *that I have power to crucifie thee, and I have power to release thee, q. d.* Refusest thou to answer me? dost thou not know who and what I am? Yes, yes, saith Christ, I know thee well enough to be a poor impotent creature, who hast no power at all, but what is given thee from above; I know thee and therefore do not fear thee.

thee. But we are apt to take their own boasts for truth, and believe their power to be such as they vainly vogue it to be; whereas in truth all your enemies are sustained by Christ, *Colos* 1.17. They are bounded and limited by Christ, *Rev.* 2. 10. Providence hath its influences upon their hearts and wills immediatly *Jer.* 15. 11. *Psal.* 106. 46. So that they cannot do whatever they would do, but their wills as well as their hands are ordered by God. *Jacob* was in *Laban's* and in *Esau's* hands; both hated him, but neither could hurt him. *David* was in *Sauls* hand, who hunted for him as a prey, yet is forced to dismiss him quietly, blessing in stead of slaying him. *Melancthon* and *Pomeren* both fell into the hands of *Charels* the Fifth, than whom Christendom had not a more prudent Prince, nor the Church of Christ a fiercer enemy; yet he treats these great and active Reformers gently, dismisseth them freely, not once forbidding them to preach or print the Doctrine which he so much opposed and hated.

O Christian, if ever thou wilt get above thy fears, settle these things upon thy heart by faith:

1. That the reins of Government are in Christs hands; enemies like wild horses may prance and tramp up and down the world, as though they would tread down all that are in their way; but the bridle of Providence is in their mouths, and upon their proud necks, 2 *Kings* 19. 28. And that bridle hath a strong crub.

2. The care of the Saints properly pertains to Christ, he is the head of the body, *Eph.* 1. 22, 23. Our

23. Our conſulting head: And it were a reproach and diſhonour to Chriſt, to fill our own heads with diſtracting cares and fears, when we have ſo wiſe an head to conſult and contrive for us.

3. You have lived all your days upon the care of Chriſt hitherto, no truth is more manifeſt than this, that there hath been a wiſdom beyond your own, that hath guided your ways, *Jer.* 10. 23. A power above your own, that hath ſupported your burdens, *Pſal.* 73. 26 A ſpring of relief out of your ſelves that hath ſupplied all your wants, *Luke* 22. 36. He hath performed all thing for you.

4. Jeſus Chriſt hath ſecured his people by many promiſes to take care of them how dangerous ſoever the times ſhall be, *Eccl.* 8. 13 *Pſal.* 76. 10. *Amos* 9. 8, 9. *Rom.* 8 28. O if theſe things were throughly believed and well improved! fears could no more diſtract or afflict our hearts, than ſtorms or clouds could trouble the upper Region: But we forgot his providences and promiſes, and ſo are juſtly left in the hands of our own fears to be afflicted for it.

II. *Rule.*

Subject your carnal reaſonings to Faith and keep your thoughts more under the government of Faith, if ever you expect a compoſed and quiet heart in diſtracting evil times.

He that layeth aſide the Rules of Faith, & meaſures all things by the rule of his own ſhallow reaſon, will be his own bugbear; if reaſon may be permitted to judge all things, and to make its

own

own inferences and conclusions from the aspects and appearances of second causes, your hearts shall have no rest day nor night: this alone will keep you in continual Alarms.

And yet how apt are the best men to measure things by this rule, and to judge of all Gods designs and mysterious providence by it, in other things it is the judge and *Arbiter*, and therefore we would make it so here too, and what it concludes and Dictates, we are prone to believe, because its dictates are backt and befriended by sense, whence it gathers its intelligence and information. *O quam sapiens Argumentatrix sibi videtur ratio humana?* How wise and strong do its arguments and conclusions seem to us, saith *Luther*. This carnal reason is the thing that puts us into such confusions of mind and thoughts. 'Tis this that,

1 Quarrels with the promises, shakes their credit, and our confidence in them, *Exod.* 5. 22. 23.

2. 'Tis that boldly limits the divine power, and assignes it boundaries of its own fixing, *Psal.* 78. 20. 41.

3 'Tis carnal reason that draws desperate conclusions from providential appearances and aspects, 1 *Sam* 27. 1. and prognosticates our ruine from them.

4. 'Tis this carnal reason that put us upon sinful shifts and indirect courses to deliver and save our selves from danger, which do but the more perplex and entangle us, *Isa.* 30 15 16.

5. It is mostly from our arrogant reasonings that

that our thoughts are discomposed and divided; from this fountain it is that they flow into our hearts in multitudes when dangers are near, *Psal.* 94. 19. *Psal.* 42. 1 All these mischiefs owe themselves to the exorbitant actings and intrusions of our carnal reasons; but these things ought not to be so, this is beside rule. For,

1. Though there be nothing in the matters of faith, or providence contrary to right reason, yet there are many things in both, quite above the reach, and beyond the ken of reason, *Isai.* 55 8. And,

2. The confident dictates of reason are frequently confuted by experience all the World over; 'tis every day made a liar, and the frights it puts us into, proved to be vain and groundless, *Isai.* 51 13.

Nothing then can be better for us, than to resign up our reason to faith, to see all things through the promises, and trust God over all events.

12 *Rule.*

To conclude, exalt the fear of God in your hearts, and let it gain the ascendent over all your other fears.

This is the prescription in my Text, for the cures of all our slavish fears, and indeed all the forementioned rules for the cure of sinful fears, run into this, and are reducible to it. For,

1. Doth the knowledge and application of the Covenant of Grace cure our fears? The fear of God is both a part of that Covenant, and an evidence of our interest in it, *Jer.* 32. 40.

2. Doth

2. Doth sinful fear plunge men into such distresses of Conscience? Why, the fear of God will preserve your wayes clean and pure, *Psa.* 19 9. and so those mischiefs will be prevented.

3. Doth foresight and provision for evil days prevent distracting fears when they come? Nothing like, the fear of God enables us to such a prevision, and provision for them, *Heb.* 11. 7.

4. Do we relieve our selves against fear by committing all to God? Surely 'tis the fear of God that drives us to him as our only *Asylum*, and sure Refuge, *Mal.* 3 16. They feared God. and thought upon his Name, (*i. e.*) they meditated on his Name, which was their Refuge, his Attributes their chambers to rest.

5. Must our affections to the world be mortified, before our fears can be subdued? This is the instrument of mortification, *Neh.* 5: 15.

6. Do the worthy examples of those that are gone before us, tend to the cure of our cowardise and fears? Why, the fear of God will provoke in you an holy self jealousie, lest you fail of the grace they manifested, and come short of those excellent patterns, *Heb.* 12. 15.

7. Is the assurance of interest in God, and the pardon of sin, such an excellent Antidote against slavish fear? Why, he that walks in the fear of God, shall walk in the comforts of the holy Ghost also, *Acts* 9 31.

8. Is integrity of heart and way such a fountain of courage in evil times? Know Reader, no grace promotes this integrity and uprightness more than the fear of God doth, *Prov.* 16. 6. *Prov.* 23. 17. 9. Do

9. Do the reviving of paſt experiences ſuppreſs ſinful fears; no doubt this was the ſubject which the fear of God put them upon, for mutual encouragement, *Mal.* 3. 16.

10. Are the providences of God in the world ſuch cordials againſt fear; The fear of God is the very Character and mark of thoſe perſons over whom his providence ſhall watch in the difficulteſt times, *Eccl.* 8. 12.

11. Doth our truſting in our own reaſon, and making it our rule and meaſure, breed ſo many fears? Why, the fear of God will take men off from ſuch ſelf confidence, and bring them to truſt the faithful God with all doubtful Iſſues and events, as the very ſcope of my Text fully manifeſt. Fear not their fear; their fear moving by the direction of carnal reaſon drove them not to God, but to the *Aſſyrian* for help, follow not you their example in this: But how ſhall they help it; Why, ſanctifie the Lord of Hoſts and make him your fear.

CHAP. VII.

Anſwering the moſt Material Pleas for ſlavish Fears, and diſſolving the common Objections againſt courage and conſtancy of mind in times of danger.

THE Pleas and Excuſes for our cowardlineſs, and faintneſs in the day of trouble are endleſs, and ſo would his task be that ſhould undertake particularly to anſwer them all 'Tis but the cutting off an *Hydra's* head, when one is gone,

gone, ten more ſtart up, what is moſt material I will here take into conſideration. When good men (for with ſuch I am dealing in this chapter) ſee a formidable face and appearance of ſharp and bloody times approaching them; they begin to tremble, their hearts faint, and their hands hang down with unbecoming deſpondency, and puſillanimity; their thoughts are ſo diſtracted, their reaſon and faith ſo clouded by their fears that their temptations are thereby exceedingly ſtrengthned upon them, and their principles ad profeſſions brought under the deriſion and contempts of their enemies; and if their brethren, to whom God hath given more courage and conſtancy, and who diſcern the miſchief like to enſue from their uncomely carriage, admonish and adviſe them of it: They have abundance of Pleas and defences for their fears, yea, when they reaſon the point of ſuffering in their own thoughts, and the matter is debated (as in ſuch times it's common) betwixt faith and fear, O what endleſs work do their fears put upon their faith, to ſolve all the *Buts* and *Iſs* which their fears will object or ſuppoſe.

Some of the principal of them I think it worth while here to conſider, and endeavour to ſatisfie, that if poſſible I may prevail with all gracious perſons to be more magnanimous. And firſt of all:

1. *Plea.*

Sufferings for Chriſt are ſtrange things to the Chriſtians of this age, we have had the happy lot to fall into milder times than the Primitive Chriſtians

ſtians did, or thoſe that ſtrugled in our own land in the beginning of Reformation; and therefore we may be excuſed for our Fears, by reaſon of our own unacquaintedneſs with ſufferings in our times.

Anſwer.

1. One fault is but a bad excuſe for another, why are ſufferings ſuch ſtrangers to you? Why did you not caſt upon them in the days of peace and reckon that ſuch days muſt come? Did you not covenant with Chriſt to follow him whitherſoever he ſhould go, to take up your croſs and follow him? And did not the world plainly tell you, that *All that will live godly in Chriſt Jeſus, muſt ſuffer perſecution*, 2 *Tim.* 3. 12. *And that we muſt through much tribulation enter into the Kingdom of God*, *Acts* 14. 22. Did we fall a ſleep in quiet and proſperous days, and dream of Halcyon days all our time on earth? That the mountain of our proſperity ſtood ſtrong, and we ſhould never be moved? That we ſhould die in our neſt, and multiply our days as the ſand; *Babylons* Children indeed dream ſo, *Rev.* 18. 7. but the Children of *Sion* ſhould be better inſtructed Alas! how ſoon may the brighteſt day be overcaſt? The weather is not ſo variable, as the ſtate of the Church in this world is; now a calm, *Acts* 9. 31. and then a ſtorm, *Acts* 12 1. 2. You could not but know what contingent and variable things all things on earth are; Why then did you delude your ſelves with ſuch fond dreams? But as a learned man rightly obſerves, *Mundus ſeneſcens paritur Gerſon.*

Phantaſias,

Phantasiast, The older the World grows the more drowsie and doting it still grows, and these are the days in which the wise as well as the foolish Virgins slumber. Sure 'tis but a bad Plea after so many warnings from the word; and from the rod to say, I did not think of such times, I dreamed not of them.

2. Or if you say, though you have conversed with death and sufferings by speculation, yet you lived not in such times wherein you might see (as other sufferers did) the encouraging faith, patience, and zeal of others set before your eye in a lively pattern and example. Sufferings were not only familiarized to them by frequency, but facilitated also by the daily example of those that went before them.

But think you indeed that nothing but encouragement and advantage to followers, arose from the tryals of those that went before? Alas, there were sometimes the greatest damps and discouragements imaginable; the zeal of those that followed hath often been inflamed by the faintings of those that were tried before them.

Anno 250. In the seventh Persecution under *Decius*, there were standing before the Tribunal, certain of the Warriours or Knights, *viz.* *Ammon*, *Zenon*, *Ptolomeus*, *Ingenuus*, and a certain aged man called *Theophilus*, who all standing by as Spectators, when a certain Christian was examined, and their seeing him for fear ready to decline and fall away, did almost burst for sorrow within themselves; they made signs to him with their hands

hands, and all gestures of the Body to be constant, this being noted by all the standers by they were ready to lay hold upon them; but they preventing the matter, pressed up of their own accord, before the bench of the judge, professing themselves to be Christians, insomuch that both the *President* and the *Benchers* were all astonished, and the Christians which were judged, the more encouraged. Such damping spectacles the Christians of former ages had frequently set them before them.

And it was no small trial to some of them, to hear the fainings and abnegation of those that went before them, pleaded against their constancy; as in the time of *Valens* it was urged by the Persecutors: Those that came to their trial before you, have acknowledged their errors, begged our pardon, and turned to us; and why will you stand it out so obstinately? But the Christians answered, *Nos hac potissimum ratione viriliter stabimus, For this very reason we will stand to it the more manfully, to repair their scandal by our greater courage for Christ.* These were the helps and advantages they often had in those days, therefore lay not so much stress upon that; their courage undoubtedly flowed from an higher spring and better principle, than the company they suffered with.

3. And if presidents and experiences of others to break the Ice before you, be so great an advantage, surely we that live in these latter times have the most and best helps of that nature that ever any people in the world had. You have all

their

their examples recorded for your encouragement, and therefore *Think it not strange concerning the fiery tryal, as though some strange thing had happened to you*, as the Apostle speaks, 1 *Pet.* 4. 12. This Plea is weighted, and no great weight found in it.

2. *Plea.*

But my nature is soft and tender, my constitution more weak and subject to the impressions of fear than others; some that have robust bodies and hardy stout minds, may better grapple with such difficulties than I can, who by constitution and education, am altogether unfit to grapple with those torments, that I have not patience enough to hear related; my heart faints and dies within me, if I do but read or hear of the barbarous usages of the Martyrs, and therefore I may well be excused for my fears and faint heartedness when the case is like to be my own.

Answer.

1. 'Tis great mistake to think that the meer strength of natural constitution can carry any one through such sufferings for Christ, or, that natural tenderness and weakness Divinly assisted, cannot bear the heaviest burdens that ever God laid upon the shoulders of any sufferer for Christ. Our sufferings and bearing abilities are not from nature but from Grace. We find men of strong bodies and resolute daring minds, have fainted in time of Tryal. Doctor *Pendleton*, in our own story, was a man of a robust and massie body, and a resolute daring mind; yet when he came

came to the tryal, he utterly fainted and fell off On the other side, what poor feeble bodies have sustained the greatest torments! and out of weakness, been made strong, *Heb.* 11. 34. The Virgine *Eulalia* of *Emerita* in *Portugal* was young and tender, but twelve years old, and with much indulgence and tenderness, brought up in an honourable family, being a person of considerable quality; yet how courageously did she sustain the most cruel Torments of Christ! when the Judge fawned upon her with this tempting language, Why wilt thou kill thy self, so young, a flower, and so near those honourable marriages, and great Dowries thou mightest enjoy: Instead of returning a retracting or doubtful answer, *Eulalia* threw down the Idol, and spurnt abroad with her feet the heap of incense prepared for the cencers; and when the Executioner came to her, she intertained him with this language, *Go to thou Hangman, burn, cut, mangle thou these earthly members, it is an easie matter to break a britle substance; but the inward mind thou shalt not hurt.* And when one joynt was pulled from another, she said, *Behold, what a pleasure it is for them, O Christ, that remember thy triumphant victories, to attain unto those high dignities.* So that our constitutional strength is not to be made the measure of our passive fortitude: God can make the feebleſt and tendereſt person stand, when strong bodies and blustering, resolute, daring minds, faint and fall.

Acts and Men. v. 1. *p.* 120.

2. Are

2. Are our bodies so weak, and hearts so tender that we can bear no sufferings for Christ; Then we are no way fit to be his followers. Christianity is a warfare, and Christians must endure hardship, 2 *Tim.* 2. 3. Delicacy and tenderness is as odd a sight in a Christian, as it is in a Souldier: And we cannot be Christs disciples, except we deliberate the terms, and having considered well what it is like to cost us, do resolve in the strength of God to run the hazard of all with him and for him. 'Tis in vain to talk of a Religion that we think not worthy the suffering and enduring any great matter for.

3. And if indeed Reader, thy constitution be so delicate and tender, that thou art not able to bear the thoughts [illegible] or Christ; how is it if thou art not more terrified with the torments of hell, which all they that deny Christ on earth must feel and bear eternally! O what is the wrath of man in comparison with the wrath of God! but as the bite of a flea to the rendings of a Lyon. This is the consideration propounded by Christ, in *Matth.* 10. 28. *Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.* The infinite and insupportable wrath of the great and terrible God should make our souls shrink and shake at the thoughts of it, rather than the sufferings of the flesh which are but for a moment.

4 Know that the wisdom and tenderness of thy father, will proportion the burden thou must bear, to thy back that must bear it; he will debate

bear in measure, and not overload thy feeble shoulders: Thou shalt find those things easie in tryal, that now seem insupportable in the terrible prospect; a way of escape or support will certainly be opened that thou mayest be able to bear it.

3. *Plea.*

But others plead the sad experience they have had of their own feebleness and weakness in former trials and exercises of an inferiour nature, in which their faith and patience hath failed them: and how can they imagine they shall ever be able to stand in the fiercest and most fiery triall? If we have run with the footmen and they have wearied us in the land of peace, how shall we then contend with horses in the swellings of *Jordan*? *Jer.* 12. 5.

Answer.

1. We are strong or weak in all our Tryals, be they great or small according to the assisting grace we receive from above; if he leave us in a common and light Trial to our own *strength* it will be our over-match, and if he assist us in great and extraordinary Tryals we shall be more than Conquerours. At one time *Abraham* could offer up his only son to God with his own hand: at another time he is so afraid of his life, that he acts very unsuitable to the character of a believer and was shamefully rebuked for it by *Abimelech*. At one time *David* could say, though an Host encamp against me I will not fear: At another time he feigns himself mad, and acted beneath himself, both as a man, and as a man en-

2. Are our bodies so weak, and hearts so tender that we can bear no sufferings for Christ; Then we are no way fit to be his followers. Christianity is a warfare, and Christians must endure hardship, 2 *Tim.* 2. 3. Delicacy and tenderness is as odd a sight in a Christian, as it is in a Souldier: And we cannot be Christs disciples, except we deliberate the terms, and having considered well what it is like to cost us, do resolve in the streng h of God to run the hazard of all with him and for him. 'Tis in vain to talk of a Religion that we think not worthy the suffering and endeavouring any great matter for.

3. And indeed Reader, thy constitution be so delicate and tender, that thou art not able to bear the thoughts or torments of Christ; how is it now that thou art not more terrified with the torments of hell, which all they that deny Christ on earth must feel and bear eternally! O what is the wrath of man in compari on with the wrath of God! what is the bite of a flea to the racks and gripes of a devil. This is the consideration propounded by Christ, in *Matth.* 10. 28. *Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.* The infinite and insupportable wrath of the great and terrible God should make our souls shrink and shake at the thoughts of it, rather than the sufferings of the flesh which are but for a moment.

4. Know that the wisdom and tenderness of thy father, will proportion the burden thou must bear, to thy back that must bear it; he will debate

bear in measure, and not overload thy feeble shoulders: Thou shalt find those things easie in tryal, that now seem insupportable in the terrible prospect; a way of escape or support will certainly be opened that thou mayest be able to bear it.

3. *Plea.*

But others plead the sad experience they have had of their own feebleness and weakness in former trials and exercises of an inferiour nature, in which their faith and patience hath failed them: and how can they imagine they shall ever be able to stand in the fiercest and most fiery triall? If we have run with the footmen and they have wearied us in the land of peace, how shall we then contend with horses in the swellings of *Jordan*? *Jer.* 12. 5.

Answer.

1. We are strong or weak in all our Tryals, be they great or small according to the assisting grace we receive from above; if he leave us in a common and light Trial to our own *strength* it will be our over-match, and if he assist us in great and extraordinary Tryals we shall be more than Conquerours. At one time *Abraham* could offer up his only son to God with his own hand: at another time he is so afraid of his life, that he acts very unsuitable to the character of a believer and was shamefully rebuked for it by *Abimeleck*. At one time *David* could say, though an Host encamp against me I will not fear: At another time he feigns himself mad, and acted beneath himself, both as a man, and as a man en-

riched with so much faith and experience. At one time *Peter* is afraid to be interrogated by a Maid: at another time he could boldly confrount the whole Counsel, and own Christ and his truths to their faces. In extraordinary tryals, we may warantably expect extraordinary assistances, and by them we shall be carried through the greatest, how often soever we have failed in smaller Tryals.

2. The design and end of God in giving us experience of our own weakness in lesser troubles, is not to discourage and daunt us against we come to greater, (which is the use *Satan* here makes of it) but to take us off from self-confidence and self dependence; to make us see our own weakness, that we may more heartily and humbly betake our selves to him in the way of Faith and fervent Supplication.

4. *Plea.*

But some will object that they cannot help their fears and tremblings when any danger appears; because fear is the disease, at least the sad effect and symptome of a disease with which God hath wounded them, a deep and fixed melancholy hath so far prevailed, that the least trouble overcomes them; If any sad afflictive providence befal, or but threaten them; their fears presently rise, and their hearts sink, sleep departs, thoughts tumultuate, the bloody boyls, and the whole frame of nature is put into disorder. If therefore the Lord should permit such great and dreadful tryals to befal them, they can think of nothing less then dying by the hand of their

Isa. 33. 16. Its shadowed out unto us by a munition of rocks, *His place of defence shall be a munition of rocks.* How secure is that person that is environed with rocks on every side? Yea you will say, but yet a rock is but a cold and barren refuge, though other enemies cannot, yet hunger and thirst can invade and kill him there. No, in this rock is a store house of provision; as well as a magazine for defence: so it follows, *Bread shall be given him and his water shall be sure.*

And sometimes it is resembled to us by the wings of a fowl, spread with much tenderness over her young for their defence, *Psal.* 57. 1. *Yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge untill these calamities be over past.* So *Psal.* 17. 8. *Keep me as the apple of thine eye, hide me under the shadow of thy wings.* No part of the body hath more guards upon it, than the apple of the eye. God is as careful to preserve his people, as men are to preserve their eyes: *and he that toucheth them, toucheth the apple of his eyes.* But we need not go from one Metaphor to another, to shew you where the Saints refuge is in time of danger, you have a whole bundle of them lying together in that one Scripture, *Psal* 18. 22. *The Lord is my rock and my fortress, and my deliverer, my God, my strength in whom I will trust, my buckler, and the horn of my Salvation, and my high tower.* Where you find all kind of defence, either natural, or artificial, under a pleasant variety of apt Metaphors, ascribed to God for the security of his people.

Now

riched with so much faith and experience. At one time *Peter* is afraid to be interrogated by a Maid: at another time he could boldly confrount the whole Counsel, and own Christ and his truths to their faces. In extraordinary tryals, we may warantably expect extraordinary assistances, and by them we shall be carried through the greatest, how often soever we have failed in smaler Tryals.

2. The design and end of God in giving us experience of our own weakness in lesser troubles, is not to discourage and daunt us against we come to greater, (which is the use *Satan* here makes of it) but to take us off from self-confidence and self dependence; to make us see our own weakness, that we may more heartily and humbly betake our selves to him in the way of Faith and fervent Supplication.

4. *Plea.*

But some will object that they cannot help their fears and tremblings when any danger appears; because fear is the disease, at least the sad effect and symptome of a disease with which God hath wounded them, a deep and fixed melancholy hath so far prevailed, that the least trouble overcomes them; If any sad afflictive providence befal, or but threaten them; their fears presently rise, and their hearts sink, sleep departs, thoughts tumultuate, the bloody boyls, and the whole frame of nature is put into disorder. If therefore the Lord should permit such great and dreadful tryals to befal them, they can think of nothing less then dying by the hand of their

Isa. 33. 16. Its ſhadowed out unto us by a munition of rocks, *His place of defence ſhall be a munition of rocks.* How ſecure is that perſon that is environed with rocks on every ſide? Yea you will ſay, but yet a rock is but a cold and barren refuge, though other enemies cannot, yet hunger and thirſt can invade and kill him there. No, in this rock is a ſtore houſe of proviſion; as well as a magazine for defence: ſo it follows, *Bread ſhall be given him and his water ſhall be ſure.*

And ſometimes it is reſembled to us by the wings of a fowl, ſpread with much tenderneſs over her young for their defence, *Pſal.* 57. 1. *Yea, in the ſhadow of thy wings will I make my refuge untill theſe calamities be over paſt.* So *Pſal.* 17. 8. *Keep me as the apple of thine eye, hide me under the ſhadow of thy wings.* No part of the body hath more guards upon it, than the apple of the eye. God is as careful to preſerve his people, as men are to preſerve their eyes: *and he that toucheth them, toucheth the apple of his eyes.* But we need not go from one Metaphor to another, to ſhew you where the Saints refuge is in time of danger, you have a whole bundle of them lying together in that one Scripture, *Pſal* 18. 22. *The Lord is my rock and my fortreſs, and my deliverer, my God, my ſtrength in whom I will truſt, my buckler, and the horn of my Salvation, and my high tower.* Where you find all kind of defence, whether natural, or artificial, under a pleaſant variety of apt Metaphors, aſcribed to God for the ſecurity of his people.

Now

Now for the caſting of this great point into as eaſie and profitable a Method as I can; I ſhall reſolve this general truth into theſe following Propoſitions, which are implied or expreſſed in the Text and Doctrine thence deduced; and the firſt is this.

1. Propoſition.

That there are times and ſeaſons appointed by God for the pouring out of his indignation upon the world.

2. Propoſition

That Gods own people are concerned in, and ought to be affected with thoſe Judgements.

3. Propoſition.

That God hath a ſpecial and particular care of his people in the dayes of his indignation.

4. Propoſition.

That God uſually premonishes the world, eſpecially his own people, of his Judgements before they befall them.

5. Propoſition.

That Gods Attributes, Promiſes, and providences are prepared for the ſecurity of his people, in the greateſt diſtreſſes that befal them in the world.

6. Propoſition.

That none but Gods people are taken into theſe chambers of ſecurity, or can expect his ſpecial protection in evil times.

And then I ſhall apply the whole in the proper uſes of it.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Demonstrating the first Proposition, That there are times and seasons appointed by God for the pouring out of his indignation upon the world.

SECT. I.

THIS is plainly implyed in the Text, that there are times of indignation appointed to befal the world; yea, and more than this; not only that such times shall come, but the duration and continuance is also under an appointment; *Hide thy self for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast.* The Prophet tells us in *Zeph.* 2. 2. that these Stormy times are under a decree, and that decree is there compared to a pregnant Woman which is to go out her appointed months, and then to travel and bring forth: so it is in the judgements GOD brings upon the world. We see them not in the dayes of provocation, *sed adhuc fœtus in utero latet*, but all this while it is in the womb of the decree, and at the appointed season they shall become visible to the world. As there are in Nature fair Halcyon days, and cloudy overpast, and stormy: So 'tis in providences, *Eccles.* 7 14 *God hath set one over against the other.* Yea, one is the occasion of the other; for look as the Sun in a hot day exhales abundance of vapours from the Earth, and sea, these occasion showers, thunder, and tempests, and those again clear the Air, and dispose it to fair weather again. So it is here,

Prosperity is the occasion of abundance of sin, this brings on adversity from the justice of God to correct it; adversity being sanctified, humbles, reforms, and purges the People of God, and this again by mercy procures their prosperity: So you find the account stated in *Psal.* 107. 17. *Fools because of their iniquities are afflicted, then they cry to the Lord in their troubles, and he saveth them out of their distresses.*

And this apointment of times of distress is both profitable and necessary for the world, especially Gods own people in it.

In general, hereby the Being and righteousness of God is cleared and vindicated against the Atheism and Infidelity of the world, *Psal.* 9. 16. *The Lord is known by the Judgements that he executeth.* Impunity is the occasion of many Atheistical thoughts in the world *Jer.* 48 11. *Moab hath been at ease from his youth, and he hath setled on his lees, and hath not been emptied from vessel to vessel, neither hath he gone into captivity, therefore his taste remained in him, and his scent is not changed.* So *Psal* 55. 19. *Because they have no changes therefore they fear not God.* Kingdoms, Families, and particular Persons, like standing waters and ponds, are apt to corrupt by long continued peace and prosperity, the Lord therefore sees it necessary to purge the world by his judgements; *When thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.* Those Sermons that God preaches from Heaven by the terrible voice of his judgments, startle and rouze the secure world

more than all the warnings and exhortations of his Ministers could ever do: Those that slept securely under our Ministry, will fear and tremble under his rods; those that are without faith are not without sense and feeling, their own eyes will affect their hearts, though our words could make no impression on them.

SECT. II.

But of what use soever these National Judgements are to others, to be sure they shall be beneficial to Gods own people; when others die by fear, they shall live by faith. If they be baneful poison to the wicked, they shall be healthful physick to the Godly. For,

1. By these calamities God will mortifie and purge their corruptions, this Winter weather shall be useful to destroy and rot those rank weeds, which the Summer of prosperity bred, *Isa.* 27. 9. *By this therefore shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged.* Physick, in its own nature is gripeing and unpleasant; but very useful and necessary to purge the body from noxious and malignant humors, which retained may put life it self in hazard; and it is with the body Politick, as with the body Natural.

2. National Judgments drive the people of God nearer to him, and one to another; they drive the people of GOD to their knees, and make them pray more frequently, more fervently, and more feelingly than they were wont to do; in this posture you find them, in *ver.* 8, 9.

of this Chapter *Yea, in the way of thy judgments O Lord, have we waited for thee, the desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee. With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early.*

3. In a word, by these distractions and distresses of Nations, the people of God are more weaned from the World, and made to long more vehemently after heaven; being now convinced by experience that this is not their rest. When all things are tranquil and prosperous, Gods own people are but too apt to fall asleep and dream of pleasure and rest on earth, to say as *Job* in his prosperity, *I shall die in my nest, I shall multiply my days as the sand.* And then are their heads and hearts filled with many projects and designs: to promote their comforts, and make provision for their accommodations on earth: The multiplicity of earthly cares and comforts take up their time and thoughts, too much, and make them that they mind death and eternity too little. But saith God, this must not be so, things must not go on at this rate, the prosperous world must not thus enchant my people; I must imbitter the *earth* that I may thereby sweeten heaven the more to them; when they find no rest below they will surely seek it above.

These and such like are the gracious designs and ends of God in shaking the world by his terrible Judgements: but yet, though National troubles must necessarily come, the wisest of men can-

cannot positively determine the precise time of those judgements; we may indeed by the sig s of the times discern their near approach: yet our judgment can be but probable and conjectural, seing there are tacite conditions in the dreadfullest threatnings, *Jer.* 18 7, 8. *Jonah* 3. 9, 10. And such is the mercifull nature of God, that he ofttimes turns away his anger from his people, when it seems ready to pour down upon them, *Psal.* 78. 38. The consideration whereof no way indulges security, but encourages to repentance, and greater fervency in Prayer.

CHAP. III.

Opening and confirming the second Proposition, viz. That Gods own people are much concerned in, and ought to be suitably affected with those judgements that befal the Nation wherein they live.

SECT. I.

IF Gods people have no concernment in these things, why are they called upon in this Text, to run into their chambers, hide themselves, & shut their doors, till the indignations be overpast? Certainly though God hath better provided for them than others, yet they are two ways concerned in these cases as much as others. *viz.*

1. Upon a Political
2. Upon a Religious Account.

1. Upon a Political account, as they are mem-

bers of the community, and ſo are equally concerned in the good or evil that befal the Nation in which they live, their Cabbins muſt follow the ſate of the Ship in which they Sail, their Lives, Liberties, Eſtates, and Intreſt ſink and ſwim with the publick. The good figs were carried away with the bad, *Jer.* 24. 5. In theſe outward reſpects it often times bears as hard upon the righteous as upon the wicked. *Ezek.* 21. 3. *I will draw forth my ſword of his sheath, and will cut off from thee the righteous and the wicked:* In theſe outward reſpects as it is with the good, ſo with the ſinner, *Eccleſ.* 9. 2. The ſame fire that burns the dry tree, oftentimes burnes the green tree too, *Exek.* 20.47. Grace is above all hazards, but creature enjoyments and comforts are not. The ſins of the *Sodomites* involve not only their own houſes and eſtates, but *Lots* alſo, in the ruine and overthrow: wicked men often fare the better for the company of the godly, and the godly often fare the worſe for the company of the wicked.

And it is not to be wondered at, if we conſider that even the Saints themſelves have an hand in the provocation of theſe Judgments, as well as others, *Deut.* 32. 19. *And when the Lord ſaw it he abhored them, becauſe of the provoking of his ſons and of his daughters.* We have contributed to the common heap-guilt, and therefore muſt Juſtifie God if we partake with others in the common calamity.

2. They are greatly concerned in ſuch Judgments upon a Religious and Chriſtian account, for

for it is usual for the flood of Gods judgements not only to sweep away our civil & natural, but our spiritual and best enjoyments and comforts. Thus the Ordinances of God ceased in *Babylon*, and there the faithful bewailed their misery upon that account, *Psal.* 137. *per totum*; *we wept when we remembred thee, O Zion.* Not only *Israelites*, but the *Ark* is taken prisoner by the enemy, 1 *Sam.* 4 11. And you find the people of God more deeply concerned upon this account, than for all their outward losses and other sufferings, *Zeph.* 3. 18. *I will gather them of thee that are sorrowful for the Solemn assemblies, to whom the reproach of it was a burden.* For by how much our souls are more excellent than our bodies, & the concerns of Eternity over ballance those of time; by so much more are we concerned in the loss of our spiritual, more than of our temporal mercies and enjoyments.

Grace indeed cannot be lost, but the means and instruments by which it is begotten may: the golden candlestick is one of the moveables in Gods house, *Rev.* 2 5.

Thus you see a twofold concernment that the people of God have in the effects of National Judgments.

SECT. II.

THis being so, how should all that fear God be affected with the appearances and signs of his indignation? So was *David*, *Psal.* 119. 120. *My flesh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgments.* He that feared not a

Bare, a Lyon, a *Goliah*, yet trembleth at Gods judgments. So did *Habakkuk chap* 3. *verſ.* 16. *When I heard, my belly trembled my lips quivered at the voice, rottenneſs entered into my bones.* Expreſſions denoting the deepeſt ſeizures of fear and greateſt conſternations; not that I would perſwade you to ſuch ſlaviſh fear, or unchriſtian dejection, as it is not only ſinful in it ſelf, but the cauſe and inlet of many other ſins: But to a due ſenſe both of the evils of miſery that will befall the Nation when GODS indignation comes upon it; and the evils of ſin that have incenſed it; and to ſuch a fear of both as may ſeaſonably awaken us to the uſe of all preventing remedies. And firſt,

1. O that all would lay to heart the National miſeries that GODS indignation threatens upon us. It is ſaid, *Pſalm* 107. 34 *A fruitful land is turned into barrenneſs for the wickedneſs of them that dwell therein.* It was long ſince told *England* by one of its faithful Watchmen. (*Mr. Strong,*) *The Nation and Church in which we are, is the common Ship in which we are all embarked, and if this in judgement be caſt away, whether daſhed againſt the rocks of any Forreign power, or ſwallowed up in the quick ſands of Domeſtick diviſions, it muſt needs hazard all the Paſſengers: Or if you were ſure, that for your parts you might be ſafe: would it not be a bitter thing, to ſtand upon the ſhore, and ſee ſuch a glorious veſſel as this Nation is, to be caſt away? To ſee this glorious Land defaced the bleſſed Goſpel polluted, the golden candleſtick removed, it cannot but af-*

fect

affect men that have any bowels.

Or if this move you not, yet to see a stranger to Lord it in thy habitation, and thy dwelling place to cast thee out; for your delightsome dwellings, your fruitful, pleasant, and well tilled fields to be made a pray; for you to sow, and another to reap, Impios has segetes; *for the delicate Woman upon whom the wind must not blow, to be exposed to the lust and cruelty of an enemy, and be glad to fly away naked to prolong a miserable life, which they would be glad to part with for death, were it not for fear of the exchange. For the tender Mother to look upon the child of her Womb; and consider, must this child in whom I have placed the hope of my age; for,*

Omnis in Ascanio stat chari cura parentis;

He that hath been so tenderly bred up must he fall into the rough hands of a bloody Souldier, skilful to destroy. It had been well for me if God had given me dry breasts or a miscarrying womb, rather than to bring forth children unto murtherers; or if you might be safe, how could you endure to see the miseries that should come upon your people, and the destruction of your kindred. Thus far he, but alas! What security have any of us as to our earthly comforts from the common calamities? We may please our selves as *Baruch* did, *Jer.* 45. 4 5. and dream of exemption, but by so much the greater will our distress be, when it shall surprize us.

2. You that are the people of God ought to be deeply affected with the spiritual miseries that threaten us in the day of Gods indignation: do

you consider what the removing the Candlestick out of its place is! A departing Gospel, the going down of the Sun upon the Prophets, the loss of your sweet Sabbaths, and Gospel-Feasts, and the gross darkness of Popery to fill the earth: O it is hard parting with these things, it's said, 1 *Sam.* 7. 2. when the *Ark* was removed, *that all the house of Israel lamented after the Lord.* Pity your own Souls, and be deeply affected with the misery of others, the poor Christless world, who are like to perish for want of Vision, *Prov.* 29. 18. In the Year 1072. saith *Matthew Paris*, Preaching was suppressed at *Rome*, and then Letters were framed by some as coming from hell; in which the Devil gives them thanks for the multitude of Souls sent to him that year.

3. But especially labour to affect your hearts with the sins that have incensed Gods indignation: So did the Saints in *Jerusalem*, *Ezek.* 9. 4. they sighed and mourned for all the abominations committed in it. So did *Lot*, 2 *Pet.* 2. 7. *He vexed his righteous soul from day to day.* So did *David*, *Psal.* 119. 136. *Rivers of waters run down my eyes, because men kept not thy law.* O who that loves God can refrain tears, to see the God of pity, the God of tender mercies, a father full of bowels of compassion, so incensed and provoked to indignation! Oh it is an heart melting consideration where there is any ingenuity. If our afflictions grive God to the heart as it doth, *Jud.* 10. 16. Our souls should be grieved for his dishonour.

4. To

4. To conclude, get upon your hearts such a ſenſe of Gods indignation as may quicken you to the uſe of preventing duties. So *Amos* 4. 12. *Becauſe I will do this prepare to meet thy God, O Iſrael.* So the Prophet, *Zeph.* 2 1, 2. *Gather your ſelves together before the decree bring forth.* It was *Moſes* his honour to ſtand in the breach, *Pſal* 106 23. And *Abraham*'s to plead ſo with God, *though he did not prevail.*

CHAP. IV.

Confirming the third Propoſition. viz. *That God hath a ſpecial and peculiar care of his own in the dayes of his indignation.*

SECT. I.

PRopriety and Relation engages Care and Solicitude in time of Danger; we ſee God hath put ſuch a *Storge*, and inclination into the very creatures, that they will expoſe themſelves to preſerve their young; and it cannot be imagined that the fountain of Pity which dropt this tenderneſs into the bowells of the creatures, ſhould not abound with it himſelf; is there ſuch ſtrong inclination in the very birds of the Air, that they will hazard their own lives to ſave their young? much more is God ſolicitous for his people, *Iſa.* 31. 5. *As birds flying, &c.* to their neſts when their young are in danger: So *will the Lord of Hoſts defend Jeruſalem.* No mother is more ſolicitous for her deareſt Child in danger and

and distress, than the Lord is for his people; *Isa* 49. 15. *Can a Woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea they may forget, yet will I not forget thee.* A woman (the more affectionate Sex forget her child) a piece of her self, her sucking child, which together with milk from the breast draws love from the heart. This may rather be supposed, than that the Lord should forget his people.

Two things must here be cleared. 1. That it is so. 2. Why it is so.

1. That it is so, will appear from.

1. Scripture Emblems. 2. Scripture *Promises.* 3. Scripture Instances.

1. Scripture *Emblems*, and among many I will upon this occasion single out two or three principal ones. In *Ezek.* 5. 1, 2, 3. *And thou son of man take thee a sharp knife, take thee a Barbers razor, and cause it to pass upon thy beard and upon thy beard then take the balances to weigh & divide the hair: thou shalt burn with fire a third part in the midst of the City, when the dayes of the siege are ulfilled & thou shalt take a third part, & smite about it with a knife, and a third part thou shalt scatter in the wind; and I will draw out a sword after them: Thou shalt also take thereof a few in number, and bind them in thy skirt*, You find this truth shadowed out in this excellent Emblem: *Jerusalem* the capital City is the head the numerous inhabitants are the hair, the King of *Babylon* the Razor, the weighing it in balances, is the exactness of Gods procedure in

Judge-

Judgement with them, the fire, knife, and wind, are the various judgments to which the people were appointed: the hiding of a few in the Prophets skirt, is the care of God for the preservation of his own remnant in the common calamity, this is one Emblem clearing this point. And then in *Ezek.* 9. 3, 4. the same truth is presented to us in another Emblem as lively and significant as the former. *And behold, six men came from the way of the higher gate, which lieth toward the north, and every man a slaughter weapon in his hand, & one among them was cloathed in linen with a writters inkhorn by his side, and they went in and stood before the brazen Altar; and the glory of the God of Israel was gone up from the Cherub, whereupon he was, to the threshold of his house, and he called to the man cloathed with linnen, which had the writters inkhorn by his side, And the Lord said unto him go through the midst of the City, through the midst of* Jerusalem: *and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh, and cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof.* The men that had charge over the City are the *Angels* appointed for that Service, some with slaughter weapons whose work it was to destroy, but one among them had a writters inkhorn by his side, and he was imployed to take the names, and mark the persons of Gods faithful ones among them, whom the Lord intended to preserve and hide in that common overthrow and desolation of the City, and these were to be all marked man by man before the destroying Angel was to begin his bloody work. Oh see the tender

tender care of God over his upright mourning ſervants! Once more, the ſame truth is repreſented in a third Emblem, *Mal.* 3. 17. *And they ſhall be mine, ſaith the Lord, in the day that I make up my jewels, and I will ſpare them as a man ſpareth his own ſon that ſerveth him.* Where the world is compared to an houſe on fire; God to the Maſter, & father of the family; the wicked to the uſeleſs number therein; the Saints to the children and jewels in the houſe; about theſe his firſt and principal care of preſervation is exerciſed, theſe he will be ſure to ſave, whatever become of the reſt. Thus you have the choſen Emblems that illuſtrate this comfortable truth.

2. As theſe Scripture Emblems illuſtrate it, ſo there are many excellent Scripture promiſes to confirm it, *Iſa.* 32. 2. *A man ſhal be for an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempeſt: as rivers of water in a dry place.* This man is the man Chriſt Jeſus, the tempeſt ſpoken of, are the miſeries and calamities of War, which make the land on which it falls, an hot, dry, and weary land; in the midſt and rage whereof, Chriſt ſhall be to his faithful ones a covert for protection, a river of water for ſupply, and a ſhadow for refreſhment; that is to ſay, whoſoever ſhall be neceſſary either for their ſafety or comfort. Chriſt is not only, a ſhadow to his people from the wrath of God, but alſo from the rage of men. Again, *Zech.* 2. 5. *I will be a wall of fire round about.* Alluding to Travellers in the deſert, who to prevent danger from wild beaſts in the night, uſe to make a circular fire

fire round about the place where they lie down to rest, and this fire was as a wall to secure them. You have the like gracious promise also made to the poor captived Church in *Ezek.* 11 16. *Although I have cast them far off among the heathen, and scattered them among the countreys, yet will I be to them as a little sanctuary in the countreys where they shall come.*

A little Sanctuary, the word is variously rendred and expounded: Some *Adverbially*, and render it *Paulisper*, a Sanctuary for a little while, *viz.* during their danger at the shortness of which this Adverb points, *Sanctius*. Others *Adjectively*, as we translate it, *Templum paucorum*, as *Votablus*, there were but a handful of them, and God would be as a Sanctuary to secure and protect that remnant. *Magnato*

3. And all these promises have in all ages been faithfully fulfilled to the Saints; you have an excellent Scripture for this, 2 *Pet.* 2. 4. 5. 6. when the flood was brought upon the old world there was one *Noah* a righteous man in it, and for him God provided an Ark. When *Sodom* was overthrown, there was one *Lot* in it, a just man, and God secured him out of danger; upon which that comfortable conclusion is built, *ver.* 9. *The Lord knows how to deliver the godly.* When *Jerusalem* was destroyed, a *Pella* was provided as a refuge for the godly there. Remarkable is that place to this purpose, *Isa.* 25. 4. *Thou hast been a strength to thee poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from*

from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall. And this hath God been not only once or twice, but in all ages, *Psal.* 90. 1. *Lord thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations.* Or as the Hebrew, in generations, and generations. What he hath been in former generations, to his distressed people, that he is, and will be without alteration in all generations.

SECT. II.

YET we must remember, that all who are preserved in common calamities are not the people of God; nor are all that are indeed his people preserved: He hath people enough to divide into two ranks, as the Husband man his corn, some for the mill, and some to reserve for seed. There be stars enough in the heaven to shine in both *Hemispheres*, and there are Saints enough in the world, some to shine in heaven, and some to preserve the Church on earth.

1. All that are preserved are not the people of God; in the Ark a wicked *Cham* was preserved: and those that were preserved in *Egypt*, many of them were afterwards destroyed for their unbelief, *Jud.* 5. So in *Ezekiel's* vision, a part even of those heirs which were spared, were afterwards cast into the fire; *Ezek.* 5. 4. Preservation from the dominion of sin, and the wrath to come, is peculiar to Gods own people: but as for temporal deliverances we cannot infer that conclusion.

2. Nor yet can we say that all Gods people shall

ſhall be preſerved: that promiſe *Zeph.* 2. 3. leaves it upon *a may be*, many a precious Chriſtan hath fallen in the common calamity, they have been preſerved in, but not from trouble.

But it is uſual with God to preſerve ſome in the ſoreſt judgements: and the grounds of it are.

1. Becauſe, ſome muſt be left as a ſeed to propagate and preſerve the Church, which is perpetual and can never fail; he never ſo overthrows Nations, as *Sodom* was overthrown. *Iſai.* 1. 9. this was the ground of that promiſe, *Ier* 30. 11. *For I am with thee, ſaith the Lord, to ſave thee, though I make a full end of all nations, whither I have ſcattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee.* And of that Plea, *Amos* 7. 2. *O Lord God, forgive I beſeech thee; by whom ſhall Iacob ariſe? for he is ſmall.* Except the Lord had left a ſmall remnant, we had been as *Sodom.* Remarkable to this purpoſe, is that Scripture, *Iſa.* 6. 13. *But yet in it ſhall be a tenth, and it ſhall return, and ſhall be eaten: As a Teyl tree, and as an Oak whoſe ſubſtance is in them, when they caſt their leaves. So the holy ſeed ſhall be the ſubſtance thereof.* This preſerved remnant is the holy ſeed, by which the Church is propagated and continued, *Pſal.* 102 28.

2. Becauſe, God will even in this World own and reward the tears and ſorrows of his people for the ſins of the times, and ſufferings of the Church, with the joy and comfort of better times, and a participation of *Sions* conſolation, ſo *Iſa.* 66. 10. *Rejoice ye with Jeruſalem, ye that have mourned for her.* They that have ſown in tears,

tears, do sometimes live to reap in joy, *Psalm* 125, 6. they shall say as *Isaiah* 25. 9. *Lo, this is our God, we have waited for him, and he is come to save us.* And those that live not to reap down in this world the harvest of their own Prayers and tears, shall be no losers: a full and better reward shall be given them in Heaven, *Isaiah* 57. 22.

3. Because the preserved remnant of Saints are they that must actually give unto God the glory of all his providential administrations in the world, both of judgements and mercies upon others, and towards themselves. *They that go down to the pit do not celebrate his praise, the living, the living they praise him, Isa* 38. 18. 19. Thus when God turned back *Sion's* captivity, the Remnant of Saints, that were preserved, were they that recorded his parise, *Psal.* 126. 1, 2. *Then was our mouth filled with laughter.* And fully to this sense is that Scripture, *Psal.* 102. 19. 20. 21. *He delivers those that are appointed to death,* (*i. e.*) That men had doomed to death, *That they may declare the name of the Lord in Sion, and his praise in* Jerusalem.

4. The hiding of the Saints in evil days, is the greatest discovery of the hand of GOD in the world: when he *hides* them he *shews* himself, and that, both to the Saints and to their enimies.

It is one of the most glorious mysteries of providence that ever the world beheld, *viz.* the strange and wonderful protection of poor helpless Christians from the rage and fury of their mighty and malicious enemies, though they walk

walk visibly among them, yet they are, as it were, hid from their hands. But not from their eyes. So *Jer.* 1. 18. You find God made that Prophet among the envious Princes, and against an enraged and mighty King, *As a defenced City, and as an iron pillar, and as a brazen wall.* And indeed it was easier to them to conquer and take in the strongest Fort or Garison, than that single Person, who yet walked day by day naked and open among them. So *Luther* a poor Monk was made invincible, all the Papal power could not touch him, for God hid him. All the world against one *Athanasius*, and yet not able to destroy him: for God hid him: This is the display of the glorious power of God in the world, and he hath much honour by it.

Well then, if there be a God that takes care of his own in evil dayes, do not you be distractingly careful what shall become of you in such times; you cannot see how it is possible for you to escape, but 2 *Pet.* 2. 4, 5, 6. the Lord knows how to deliver when you do not. Little did *Lot* know the way and manner of his preservation, till God opened it to him; nor *Noah* till GOD contrived it for him: There was no way to be contrived by them for escape. He that knew how to deliver them, can deliver you also.

Leave your selves to Gods dispose; it shall certainly be to your advantage; the Church is his peculiar care, *Isai.* 27. 3. *I the Lord do keep it, I will water it every moment lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day.*

The more you commit your selves to his care the

the more you engage it, *Isa.* 26. 3. *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusted in thee.* He will certainly find a place of safety for his people under or in Heaven.

Neither be too much dejected when the number of visible professors seems but small, think not that the Church will perish, when it is brought so low: This was *Elijah's* case, he thought he had been left alone, that Religion had been preserved in his single person, as the *Phœnix* of the world; but see 1 *Kings* 19. 18. God hath enough left if we were in our grave to continue Religion in the world, it concerns him more than you to look to that.

CHAP. V.

Evincing the fourth Proposition, viz. That God usually premonisheth the World, especially his own of his judgements before they befall them.

SECT. I.

GOD first warns, and then smites, he delights not to surprize men when indignation was coming, he tells his people of it in the Text and admonisheth them to hide themselves. *Surely the Lord will do nothing but he revealeth his secrets to his servants the Prophets, Amos* 3. 7. Thus when the flood was to come upon the old world, he gave them one hundred & twenty years warning of it, *Gen.* 6 3. compared with 1 Pet. 3. 19 So when *Sodom* was to be destroyed, God would not hide it from *Abraham, Gen.* 18. 17.

shall

Shall I hide from Abraham *the thing that I do?* The like discovery was made unto *Lot Gen.* 19. 12, 13, 14. So when the Captivity was at hand, *Ezekiel* was commanded to give the *Jews* solemn warning of it from GOD, *Ezek.* 3. 17 *Hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me.*

And when their City and Temple was to be destroyed by the *Romans*, how plainly did Christ foretel them of it by his own mouth, *Luke* 19. 42. 44. *Thine enemies shall cast a Trench about thee, and compass thee round and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee, and they shall not leave thee one stone upon another, because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.* Josephus also tells us that a little before the execution of this judgement upon them, a voice was heard in the temple, *Migremus hinc*, let us go hence, which voice *Tacitus* also in his Annals, mentions. *Audita major humana vox, excedere Deos, simul ingens motus excedentium.* It was more than an humane voice, telling them God was departing from them, and withall there was heard the rushing noise as of some that were going out of the Temple.

Josephus de bel Jud. lib. c. 2. Tac. lib 21.

And as there were extraordinarly premonitions of approaching judgements by revelation to the Prophets of old, and signs from heaven; so there still are standing and ordinary rules by which the World may be admonished of GODS judgements before they come upon them.

And

And the general rule, by which men may discern the indignation of God before it comes, is this; *When the same provocations, and evils are found in one Nation, which have brought down the wrath of God upon another nation; this is an evident sign of Gods judgment at the door.* For God is unchangeably holy, and just, and will not favour that in one people, which he hath punished in another; nor bless that in one age, which he hath cursed in another. And therefore that which hath been a sign of Judgment to one, must be so to all.

Here it is that the carcases of those sinners whose sins had cast them away, are as it were cast up upon the Scripture shore, for a warning to all others that they steer not the same ill course they did. 1 *Cor.* 10. 6. *Now these things were our examples.* The *Israelites* are made examples to us, plainly intimating that if we tread the same path, we must expect the same punishment. Let us therefore consider what were the evils that provoked Gods judgments against his ancient people, whom he was so loth to give up, *Hos* 11 8. and so long ere he did give up, *Jer.* 15. 6. and we shall find by the concurrant accounts that the Prophets give.

1. That Gods worship among them was generally mixed and corrupted with their own inventions, for so it is said, *Psal.* 106. 40. 41. *they went a whoring with their own inventions.* And this so inflamed the wrath of God, who is a jealous God, and tender over his own honour, that he abhored his own inheritance; yea, he expresses

expresses himself as a man doth, whose heart is broken by the unfaithfulness of his wife, *Ezek.* 6. 9. Upon this account his professing people became the generation of his wrath, *Jer.* 7, 29. 30.

2. Incorrigible obstinacy under gentler correction, *Amos* 4, 6. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. Scarcity, Mildews, Pestilence, and Sword had been upon them; and still these that remained, though saved as a brand out of the fire, in which their fellow sinners perished, would not return to God; and this hastened on the general ruin, *ver* 12, This presages the ruine of Nations indeed.

3. Stupidity and senselessness of Gods hand, was a sad Omen, and cause of that peoples ruine; So *Isai* 26. 10, 11. *Lord, when thy hand is lifted up, they will not see.* No nor yet when his hand is laid on, *Isai.* 42. 24. 25. It is not some small drop of Gods anger that passes without observation, but the *fury of his anger; not some light skirmish of his judgments with them, but the strength of battel:* Not in a corner upon some particular person, or family, but that which set him on fire round about; yet all this could not awaken *them. He hath poured upon him the fury of his anger, and the strength of battel, and it hath set him on fire round about, yet he knew it not, and it burned him, yet he laid it not to heart.* Prodigious stupidity! to be in the midst of flames, yea, to be seized by them, and destroyed sooner than awakened. So you find again in *Hos.* 7 9. *Gray hairs were here and there upon* Ephraim, *yet he knew it not.* Youth and Age are easily distinguished,

ed, and gray hairs do plainly distinguish them, being the plain tokens of a declining State, yet they took no notice of them. Such stupidity is evermore the forerunner of misery.

4. Persecution of Gods faithful Ministers and people, was another forerunning sign of their ruine, 2 *Chron.* 36. 16 *They mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words and misused his Prophets until the wrath of the Lord arose against his people, till there was no remedy.* There were also a number of upright Souls among them that were desired to worship God according to his own prescription, but a snare was laid for them in *Mizpah*, and a net spread upon *Tabor*; and therefore was judgement towards that people, *Hos.* 5. 1. *Mizpah* and *Tabor* were places in the way lying betwixt *Samaria* and *Jerusalem*, where the true worship of God was, and there were Informers or Spies set by the Priests to intercept such as would venture to serve God at *Jerusalem* according to his own prescription, this also foreboded the judgements of God upon that Nation.

5. The decay of the life and power of godliness among them plainly foreshewed their ruine at hand. *Hos* 4. 18 *Their drink is sour*, where under the Metaphor of dead & sour drink which hath lost its spirit and is become flat; there formal, heartless, and perfunctory duties are severely taxed and condemned.

6, To conclude, the mutual animosities, and feuds among that professing people, evidently shewed judgement to be at the door, *Hos.* 9. 7.

The

The days of visitation are come, the days of recompence are come, Israel *shall know it: the Prophet is a fool, the Spiritual man is mad, for the multitude of thine iniquity, and the great hatred.* This great hatred was one of the greatest sins, and saddest signs upon them. This Spirit of enmity sowed by the Devil among them, hastened their calamity. If *Ephraim* will envy *Judah*, and *Judah* vex *Ephraim*, the common enemy shall part the fray: when the whole Nation was under water, and the *Roman* Armies under the very walls of *Jerusalem*, their own Historians tell us, what bitter contentions and sharp conflicts continued among them to the very last. These things must be looked upon by all wise and considerate Men, no otherwise than we look upon Glazing Meteors, and blazing Comets, protending judgement and ruine at the door. We have had indeed terrible Signs in Heaven, a dreadful rod of God shaken over us of late, which all men ought to behold with trembling: Yet I must say those Moral Signs of judgement forementioned, are much more terrible and portentous. According therefore to the evidences of these signs among us; let all upright hearts be affected and awakened with expectations of Gods righteous judgements. It is indeed below Faith to expect evil days with despondency and distraction; but surely it is a noble exercise of Faith so to expect them, as to make due preparation for them.

SECT. II.

AND if we enquire for what end God gives such warnings to the world, & premonish

them from heaven, of the judgements that are coming on the earth, know that he doth it upon a threefold account.

1. To prevent their Execution. 2. To leave the careleſs inexcuſeable. 3. To make them more tolerable and eaſie to his own people.

1. Warning is given with deſign to prevent the execution of judgements; this is plain from *Amos* 4 12. *Therefore will I do this unto thee*; There is warning given: *And becauſe I will do this prepare to meet thy God O Iſrael:* There is the gracious deſign of preventing it, by bringing them ſeaſonably upon their knees at the foot of an angry God: You ſee the Lord expects it from all his Children, that they fall at his feet in deep humiliation, and fervent interceſſion when ever he goes forth in the way of judgement. What elſe was the deſign of God in ſending *Jonah* to *Nineveth* with that dreadful meſſage, but to excite them to repentance, and prevent their ruine? This *Jonah* guiſſed at, and therefore declined the meſſage to ſecure his credit, well knowing, that if they took warning and repented, the gracious nature of God would ſoon melt into compaſſion over them: Free grace would make him appear as a liar among the People; for to that ſenſe his own words ſound, *Jonah* 4. 2. *Was not this my ſaying, when I was yet in my Countrey; Therefore I fled before unto* Tarshish, *for I know that thou art a gracious God, q. d.* I thought before hand it would come to this; I knew how willing thou art to be prevented by repentance, therefore to ſecure my credit, I fled to *Tarshish.*

2. H

2. He forwarns of judgements to leave the incorrigible wholly inexcuſable, that thoſe who have neither ſenſe of ſin, nor fear of judgement before, might have no cloak for their folly, nor plea for themſelves afterward; *What wilt thou ſay when he ſhall punish thee?* Jer. 13. 21, 22 q d. What Plea or Apology is left thee after ſo many fair warnings? You cannot ſay you were ſurprized, before you were admonished, or ruined before you were warned.

3. God warns of judgements before they come, to make them the more eaſie to his people when they come indeed, thus in *John* 16. 4. Chriſt foretold his Diſciples of their approaching ſufferings, that when they came, they ſhould not be found amazed at them, or unprovided for them: for unexpected miſeries are aſtonishing to the beſt men, and deſtructive to wicked men, *Luke* 17. 26, 27, 28.

Well then if it be ſo, let all that are wiſe in heart conſider the Signs of the times, and ſeaſonably hearken to Gods warnings. *The Lords voice cryeth unto the City, and the man of wiſdom ſhall ſee thy Name; hear ye the rod, and who hath appointed it, Micah.* 6. 9. 'Tis our wiſdom to waylay our troubles, and provide for the worſt eſtate, whilſt we enjoy the beſt: happy is he that is at once believing: and praying for good days, and preparing for the worſt. *Noah's* example is our advantage, *Heb.* 11. 7. *Who by Faith, being warned of God, of things not ſeen as yet moved with fear prepared an Ark.* Preventing mercies are the moſt ravishing mercies, *Pſal.*

59. 10. And preventing calamities are the foreſt calamities, *Amos* 9. 10.

And let us heartily bewail the ſupinneſs and careleſneſs of the world in which we live, who take no notice of Gods warnings, but put the evil day far from them, *Amos* 6. 3. who will admit no *fear*, till they are paſt all hope: they ſee God houſing his Saints apace, yet will not ſee the evil to come, from which *God* takes them, *Iſa.* 57. 1. 2. *The righteous perisheth and no man layeth it to heart; and merciful men are taken away none conſidering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come: he shal enter into peace, they shall reſt in their beds each one walking in his uprightneſs.* They hear the cry of ſin which is gone up to heaven, but cry not for the abominations that are committed, nor tremble at the judgements that they will procure.

O careleſs Sinners drowned in Stupidity, and ſleeping like *Jonah* under the Hatches, when others are upon their knees and at their wits end! do Saints tremble, and are you ſecure? Have not you more reaſon to be afraid then they? If judgements come: the greateſt harm it can do them, is but to haſten them to Heaven: but as for you, it may hurry you away to Hell: They only fear Tribulation in the way: but you will not fear damnation in the end. Believe it Reader, in days of common calamity, both Heaven and Hell will fill apace.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Demonstrating the fifth Proposition, viz. That Gods Attributes, Promises, and Providences, are prepared for the security of his people in the greatest distresses that befall them in this World.

SECT. I.

HAving more briefly *dispatched* the foregoing preliminary Propositions, it remains that we now more fully open this fifth Proposition, which contains the main subject matter of this Discourse; here therefore our meditations must fix and abide. and truly such is the deliciousness of the subject to Spiritual hearts, that I judge it wholly needless to offer any other motive besides it self to engage your affections. Let us therefore view our *Chambers*, and see how well *God* hath provided for his Children in all their distresses that befall them in this world; it is our Fathers voice that calls to us, *Come my people, enter thou into thy Chambers.* And the

1. *Chamber.*

Which comes to be opened as a Refuge to distressed Believers in a stormy day, is that most secure and safe Attribute of *Divine power*; unto this let us first enter by serious and believing meditation, and see how safe they are whom God hides under the protection thereof in the worst and most dangerous days. In opening this Attribute we shall consider it,

1. In its own Nature and Property. 2. With

respect to the Promises. 3. As it is actuated by Providence, on the behalf of distressed Saints.

And then give you a comfortable prospect of their safe and happy condition, who take up their Lodging by Faith in this Attribute of God.

1. Let us consider the power of God in it self, and we shall find it represented to us in the Scriptures in these three lovely Properties, *viz.*

1. Omnipotent
2. Supreme Power.
3. Everlasting.

1. As an Omnipotent and All-sufficient Power, which hath no bounds or limits, but the pleasure and will of God, *Dan.* 4. 34. 35. *He doth according to his will in the Armies of Heaven; and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What dost thou?* So *Psal.* 135. 6. *Whatsoever the Lord pleased that did he in heaven and in earth, in the Seas, and all deep places.* You see Divine pleasure is the only rule according to which Divine Power exerts it self in the World; we are not therefore to limit and restrain it in our narrow and shallow thoughts, and to think in this or in that the Power of God may help or secure us; but to believe that he is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think. Thus those Worthies, *Dan.* 3. 17. By Faith exalted the power of God above the order and common rule of second Causes. *Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O King.* Their Faith resting it self upon the Omnipotent

power

power of God, expected deliverance from it in an extraordinary way, 'tis *true*, this is no standing rule for our Faith ordinarly to work by; nor have we ground to expect such miraculous Salvations, but yet when extraordinary difficulties press us, and the common ways, and means of deliverance are shut up, we ought by Faith to exalt the Omnipotency of God, by ascribing the glory thereof to him, and leave our selves to his good pleasure; without straitning or narrowing his Almighty power, according to the *mold* of our poor low thoughts and apprehensions of it: For so the Lord himself directeth our Faith in difficult cases, *Isai.* 55. 8, 9. *For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord, for as the heavens are higher than the earth; So are my ways higher then your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.* He speaks there of his pardoning mercy, which he will not have his people to contract, and limit according to the model, and platform of their own desponding, misgiving and unbelieving thoughts; but to exalt and glorifie it, according to its unbounded fulness; as it is in the thoughts of God, the fountain of that mercy; so it ought to be with respect to his power, about which his thoughts and ours do vastly differ; the power of God as we cast it in the mold of our thoughts, is as vastly different and disproportionate from what it is in the thoughts of God the fountain thereof; as the earth is to the heavens, which is but a small inconsiderable point compared with them.

2. The power of God is supream & sovereign power, from which all creature power is derived, and by which it is over-ruled, restrained, and limited at his pleasure, *Nebuchadnezzar* was a great Monarch, he ruled over other Kings, yet he held his Kingdom from *God*; it was *God* that placed not only the Crown upon his head, but his head upon his shoulders, *Dan* 2. 37. *Thou, O King art a King of kings; for the God of Heaven hath given thee a Kingdom, power, and strength, and glory.* Hence it follows, that no creature can move tongue or hand against any of Gods people, but by vertue of a Commission or permission from their *God*, albeit they think not so. *Know'st thou not*, saith *Pilate* unto Christ, *that I have power to crucifie thee, and power to release thee?* Proud worm! what an ignorant and insolent boast was this of his own power! and how doth Christ spoil and shame it in his answer? *John* 19. 10. *Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above.*

Wicked men like wild horses would run over and trample under foot all the people of *God* in the world, were it not that the bridle of Divine Providence had a strong curb to restrain them, *Ezek.* 22. 6. *The princes of Israel every one were in thee, to their power to shed blood.* And it was well for *Gods Israel* that their power was not as large as their wills were: this world is a raging and boisterous Sea, which sorely tosses the passengers for heaven that sail upon it, but this is their comfort and security: *The Lord stilleth the noise*

of

of the sea, the noise of the waves, and the tumult of the people, Psal. 65, 7. Moral as well as Natural waves, are checked and bounded by Divine power. *Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee, and the remainder of wrath thou shalt restrain, Ps.* 76. 10. As a man turns so much water into the channel as will drive the mill, and turns away the rest in another sluce.

Yea, not only the power of man, but the power of Devils also is under the restraint and limitation of this power, *Rev.* 3.10. *Satan shall cast some of you into prison, and ye shall have tribulation ten dayes.* He would have cast them into their graves, yea, into hell if he could, but it must be only into a prison, he would have kept them in prison till they had dyed and rotted there, but it must be only for ten dayes. Oh glorious Soveraign power! which thus keeps the reins of government in its own hand!

3. The power of God is an everlasting power; time doth not weaken or diminish it, as it doth all creature powers, *Isa.* 40. 28. *The Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth fainteth not, neither is weary, Isai.* 59. 1. *The Lords hand is not shortned:* (*i. e.*) He hath as much power now as ever he had, and can do for his people as much as ever he did; time will decay the power of the strongest creature, and make him faint and feeble: but the Creator of the ends of the earth fainteth not. *Thou*, saith the Psalmist, *abidest for ever, thy years flee not. Psal.* 102.27. In Gods working there is no expence of his strength, he is able to do as much as ever he did, to act over

again all the glorious deliverances that ever he wroght for his people from the beginning of the world; and to do as much for his Church now as he did at the Red Sea: and upon this ground the Church builds its Plea, *Isai.* 51. 9,10. *Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord, awake as in the ancient days of the generations of old, art thou not it that hast cut* Rahab, *and wounded the Dragon? q. d.* Lord, why should not thy people at this day expect as glorious productions of thy power as any of them found in former ages?

SECT. II.

LET us view the power of God in the vast extent of its operation, and then you will find it working beyond the line.

1. Of Creature power. 2. Of Creature expectation. 3. Of Humane probability.

1. Beyond the line of all created power, even upon the hearts, thoughts, and minds of men, where no creature hath any jurisdiction. So *Gen.* 31. 29. God bound up the Spirit of *Laban*, and becalmed it towards *Jacob*. So. *Ps.* 106.46. *He made them also to be pitied of all them that carried them captives*, Thus the Lord promised *Jeremy*, 15. 11. *I will cause the enemies to entreat thee well, in the time of evil.* This power of God softens the hearts of the most fierce and cruel enemies, and sweetens the spirits of the most bitter and enraged foes of his People.

2. Beyond the line of all Creature expectations, *Eph.* 3. 20. *God is able to do exceeding abundantly*

bundantly above all that we can ask or think. He doth so in *Spirituals*; as appears by those two famous Parables, *Luke* 15. 19. 22. *And am no more worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of thy hired servants. But the Father said to his servants, bring forth the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet.* The Prodigal desired to be but as an hired servant, and lo, the fatted Calf is killed for him, and musick to his meat, and the gold Ring upon his Finger. And in *Mat.* 18. 26, 27. The Debitor did but desire patience, and the Creditor forgave the Debt. O, thinks a poor humbled Sinner, if I might have but the least glimpse of hope, how sweet would it be! but God brings him to more than he expects, even the clear shining of assurance. It is so in *Temporals*, the Church confesses the Lord *did things they looked not for*, *Isa.* 64. 3. And in both Spirituals and Temporals this power moves in an higher Orb than our thoughts, *Isai.* 55. 8. 9. *My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor my ways your ways; but as far as the Heavens are above the Earth, so are my thoughts above your thoughs;* The Earth is but a *punctum* to the Heavens; all its tallest Cedars, Mountains, and Pyramids cannot reach it: He speaks, as it was said before, of *Gods* pitying, pardoning, & merciful thoughts, and shews that no creature can think of God, as he doth of the creature under sin, or under misery. Our thoughts are not his; either First, by way of *simple cogitation*, we cannot think such thoughts towards others in misery, by way of

pity;

or under ſin againſt us by way of pardon, as God doth: Nor ſecondly, are our thoughts as Gods in reſpect of *reflexive comprehenſion*; *i. e.* We cannot conceive or comprehend what thoſe thoughts of God towards us are, when we fall into ſin or miſery; juſt as he thinks them, they are altered, debaſed, and ſtraitned as ſoon as ever they come into our thoughts. See an excellent inſtance in *Gen.* 48.11. *I had not thought to ſee thy face, and lo God hath ſhewed me all thy ſeed.* A ſurprizing providence: and thus the Divine power works in a ſphere above all the thoughts, prayers, and expectations of men.

3. It works beyond all probabilities, and rational conjectures of men: this Almighty power hath created deliverances for the people of God, when things have been brought to the loweſt ebb, and all the means of ſalvation have been hid from their eyes. We have diverſe famous inſtances of this in Scripture, wherein we may obſerve a remarkable *gradation* in the working of this Almighty power: It is ſaid in the 2 *Kings* 14. 26, 27 *The Lord ſaw the affliction of Iſrael that it was very bitter, for there was not any ſhut up, nor any left: nor any helper for Iſrael.* A deplorable ſtate: how inevitable was their ruine to the eye of ſenſe? Well might it be called a bitter affliction: Yet from this immediate power aroſe for them a ſweet and unexpected ſalvation: and if we look into 2 *Cor.* 1. 9, 10 we ſhall find the Apoſtles and choiſeſt Chriſtians of thoſe times, giving up themſelves as loſt men, all ways of eſcape being quite out of ſight, for

ſo

so much those words signifie, *We had the sentence of death in our selves*; *i. e.* We yeelded our selves for dead men. But though they were sentenced to death, yea, though they sentenced themselves this power which wrought above all their thoughts, and rational conjectures, reprived them. And yet one step farther in *Ezek.* 37. 4. 5, 6, 7. The people of God are there represented as actually dead, yea as in their graves, yea as rotted in their graves, and their very bones dry: like those that are dead of old: so utterly improbable was their recovery: yet by the working of this Almighty power which subdueth all things to it self, their graves in *Babylon* were opened, the breath of life came into them, bone came to bone, and there stood up a very great Army: it was the working of this power above the thoughts of mans heart, which gave the ground of that famous Proverb, *Gen* 22. 14. *In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen*: And the ground of that famous Promise, *Zech.* 14. 7. *At evening time it shall be light*: *i. e.* Light shall unexpectedly spring up, when all men according to the course and order of Nature, expect nothing but increasing darkness How extensive is the power of God in its glorious operations!

SECT. III.

LET us view the power of God in its relation to the promises, for so it becomes our Sanctuary in the day of trouble: if the *power of God* be the *Chamber*, 'its the *promise* of God which is that *Golden Key* that opens it. And if we will consult

consult the Scriptures in this matter, we shall find the Almighty power of *God* made over to his people by promise, for many excellent ends and uses in the day of their trouble. As,

1. To uphold and support them, when their own strength fails, *Isai.* 41. 10. *Fear thou not, for I am with thee, be not dismayed for I am thy God; I will strengthen thee, yea, I will help thee, yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.* And which of the Saints have not sensibly felt these everlasting arms underneath their spirits, when afflictions have pressed them above their own strength? So runs the promise to *Paul* in 2 *Cor.* 12.9. *My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness*, i. e. It is made known in thy weakness. Our weakness adds nothing to Gods power, it doth not make his power perfect, but it hath the better advantage of its discovery, and puts forth it self more signally & conspicuously in our weakness: as the stars which never shine so gloriously, as in the darkest night.

2 To preserve them in all their dangers, to which they lie exposed in soul and Body, 1 *Pet.* 1. 5. *You are kept* (saith the Apostle) *by the mighty power of God.* Kept as in a Garison: this is their arm every morning, as it is *Isa.* 33. 2. *O Lord be gracious unto us, we have waited for thee, be thou their arm every morning, our salvation also in the time of trouble.* The arm is that member which is fitted for the defence of the body, and for that end so placed by the God of Nature, that it may guard every part above and below it:

it: but as good they were bound behind our backs, for any help they can give us in some cases: It is Gods Arm that defends us, and not our own. This invisible power of God makes the Saints the worlds wonder, *Psal.* 71. 7. *I am as a wonder to many, but thou art my strong refuge.* To see poor defenceless Creatures preserved, in the midst of furious enemies, that is just matter of wonder; but God being their invisible refuge, that solves the wonder; to this end the power of God is by promise engaged to his people, *Isai.* 27. 3. *I the Lord do keep it, I will water it every moment, lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day.* And thus they subsist in the midst of dangers and troubles, as the burning Bush (the Emblem of the Church) did amidst the devouring flames, *Exod.* 3. 3.

3. To deliver them out of their distresses, so runs the Promise, *Psal.* 91. 14, 15. Because *he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him, I will set him on high, because he hath known my Name, he shall call upon me, and I will answer him, I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him, and honour him.* And *Jer.* 30. 7. *Alas, for that day is great, so that none is like it: It is even the time of Jacobs trouble, but ye shall be saved out of it.* And surely there can be no distress so great, no case of Believers so forlorn: but,

1. It's easie with God to save them out of it. Are they to the eye of sense lost, as hopeless as men in the grave? Yet see *Ezek.* 37. 12 *O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your grave, and bring you into the land*

Land of Israel. And he doth whatever he doth easily, with a word, *Psal.* 44. 4. *Thou art my king, O God, command deliverance for Jacob.* And it requireth no more violent motion to do it, than he that swimeth in the water uses, *Isai.* 25. 11. A gentle ealie motion of the hand doth it.

2. And as the power of God can deliver them easily, so speedily. Their deliverance is often wrought by way of surprizal, *Isai.* 17. 14. *Behold, at evening tide trouble, and in the morning he is not.* So the Church prays in *Psal* 126. 4. *Turn again our captivity, as the streams in the south.* The Southern Countreys are dry, the streams there come not in a gentle and slow current, but being occasioned by violent sudden spouts of Rain, they presently overflow the Countrey, and as soon retire: So speedily can the power of God free his people from their dangers and fears.

3. Yea, such is the excellency of his delivering power, that he can save alone without any contribution of creature aids. So *Isai.* 56. 16. *He wondered that there was no intercessor, therefore his hand brought salvation unto him, and his righteousness it sustained him.* We read indeed *Jud.* 5. 23. *Of helping the Lord*, but that is not to express his *need*, but their *duty*, we have continual need of God, but he hath no need of us; he uses instruments, but not out of necessity, his arm alone can save us, be the danger never so great, or the visible means of deliverance never so remote.

4. Once more let us view this Chamber of **Divine Power**, as it is continually opened by the hand

hand of providence, to receive and ſecure the people of God in all their dangers. 'Tis ſaid 2 *Chr.* 16. 9. *The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the earth, to ſhew himſelf ſtrong in behalf of them, whoſe heart is perfect towards him.* Where you have an excellent account of the immediacy, univerſality, and efficacy of Divine providence, as it uſes and applys this Divine power for the guard and defence of that people, who are its charge; he doth not only ſet Angels to watch for them, but his own eyes keep *Sentinel*, even thoſe ſeven eyes of Providence mentioned, *Zech.* 3. 9. which never *ſleep nor ſlumber*, for they are ſaid to run continually to and fro, and that not in this or that particular place only, for the ſervice of ſome more eminent and excellent perſons: but through the whole earth. 'Tis an encompaſſing and ſurrounding providence which hath its eye upon all whoſe hearts are upright: all the Saints are within the line of its care and protection: the eye of providence diſcovereth all their dangers, and its arm defends them, for he ſhews himſelf ſtrong in their behalf.

The ſecret, but Almighty efficacy of providence is alſo excellently deſcribed to us in *Ezek.* 1. 8. Where the Angels are ſaid *to have their hands under their wings*, working ſecretly & undiſcernably, but very effectually for the Saints committed to their charge. Like unto which is that in *Hab.* 3. 4. where it is ſaid of God, that *He had horns coming out of his hands, and there was the hiding of his power.* The hand is the inſtrument of action, denoting Gods active power, and

and the horns coming out of them, are the glorious raies, and beams of that power ſhining forth in the ſalvation of his people: O that we could ſun our ſelves in thoſe chearful and reviving beams of Divine power, by conſidering how glorioufly they have broken forth, and ſhone out for the ſalvation of his people in all Ages, So it did for *Iſrael* at the Red Sea, *Exod.*15.6. So for *Jehoshaphat* in that great ſtreight, 2*Chr.*20. 12. 15. And ſo in the time of *Hezekiah*, 2 *Kings* 19. 3, 7. Yea in all ages from the beginning of the world the Saints have been ſheltered under theſe wings of Divine power, *Iſai.* 51. 9, 10. Thus providence, hath hanged and adorned this Chamber of Divine power with the delightful Hiſtories of the Churches manifold preſervations by it.

SECT. IV.

HAving taken a ſhort view of this glorious Chamber of Gods power abſolutely in it ſelf, and alſo in relation to his promiſes and providences, it remains now, that I preſſe and perſwade all the people of God under their fears and dangers according to *Gods* gracious invitation to enter into it, ſhut their doors, and to behold with delight this glorious Attribute working for them in all their exigences and diſtreſſes.

1. Enter into this chamber of Divine Power, all ye that fear the Lord, and hide your ſelves there in theſe dangerous and diſtreſſful days; let me ſay to you as the Prophet did to the poor diſtreſſed *Jews*, *Zec.* 9. 12. *Turn ye to your ſtrong*

hold

hold ye prisoners of hope. Strong holds might they say, Why, where are they? The Walls of *Jerusalem* are in the dust, the Temple burnt with fire, *Sion* an heap; what meanest thou then in telling us of our strong holds? Why, admit all this, yet there is *Satis præsidii in uno Deo*, Refuge enough for you in GOD alone, as *Calvin* excellently notes upon that place. Christian, art not thou able to fetch a good subsistence for thy Soul by Faith, out of the Almighty power of God? The renowned Saints of old did so. *Abraham, Isaac* and *Iacob* met with as many difficulties and plunges of trouble in their time, as ever you did, or shall meet with, yet by the exercise of their Faith upon this Attribute, they lived comfortably: And why cannot you? *Exod.* 6.3. *I appeared* saith God, *unto* Abraham, Isaac, *and* Jacob, *by the name of God Almighty.* They kept house and feasted by Faith, upon this Name of mine, O that we could do as *Abraham* did, *Rom.* 4. 21. We have the same Attribute, but alas, we have not such a Faith as his was to improve it. It is easie to believe the Almighty power of God in a calm, but not so easie to resign our selves to it, and securely rest upon it, in a Storm of adversity: But oh what peace and rest would our Faith procure us by the free use and exercise of it this way, to assist your Faith in this difficulty wherein we find the Faith of a *Moses* sometimes staggered. Let me briefly offer you these four following encouragements.

1. Consider how your gracious God hath engaged this his Almighty power by promise and Covenant

Covenant for the ſecurity of his people, God pawned it as it were to *Abraham*, in that famous Promiſe, *Gen.* 17. 1. *I am the Almighty God, walk thou before me, and be perfect.* And *Gen.* 15. 1. *Fear not Abraham, I am thy ſhield.* Say not, this was *Abrahams* peculiar priviledge, for if you conſult *Hoſ.* 12. 4. and *Heb.* 13. 5. 6. you will find that believers in theſe days, have as good a tittle to the promiſes made in thoſe days, as thoſe worthies had to whom they were immediatly made.

2. If you be Believers, your relation to God ſtrongly engageth his power for you, as well as his own promiſes. *Surely* (ſaith God) *they are my people, children that will not lie; ſo he became their Saviour, Iſai.* 63. 8. We ſay relations have the leaſt of *Entity*, but the greateſt of *Efficacy*; you find it ſo in your own experience, ſet a wife child, or friend be in eminent danger, and it ſhal engage all the power you have to ſuccor and deliver them.

3. This glorious power of God is engaged for you by the very malice and wickedneſs of your enemies, who will be apt to impute the ruine of the Saints to the defects of power in their God; from whence thoſe excellent arguments are drawn, *Num.* 14. 15, 16. *Now if thou ſhalt kill all this people as one man, then the Nations which have heard the fame of thee, will ſpeak, ſaying, becauſe the Lord was not able to bring this people into the land, which he ſware unto them, therefore he hath ſlain them in the wilderneſs.* And again, *Deut.* 32. 26, 27. you ſhall find the Lord improving this

this argument for them himself; if they do n
plead it for themselves, he will. *I would scatte*
them into corners, I would make the remembrance
of them to cease from among men, were it not that I
feared the wrath of the enemy, lest their adversa-
ries sh uld behave themselves strangly, and l
they should say, our hand is high, and the Lord h
not done all this. O see how much you
holding to the very rage of your ene
your deliverances from them!

4. To conclude, the very reliance of
by Faith upon the power of God, your
ing upon his arm engages it for your p
Isai. 26. 3. *Thou wilt keep him in perfe*
whose mind is stayed on thee, because he tr
thee. Puzle not your selves therefore an
about qualifications, but know tha
acting of your Faith on God, the recu
your souls upon him, it is that wh
gage him for your defence, how w
fective soever thou art in other resp

2. Having thus entered by F
Chamber of Divine power, the nex
Text gives you is, to shut the Doo
i. e. after the acting of your Faith, a
repose of your Souls upon Gods Al
er, then take heed lest unbelievi
jealousies creep in again and distu
your Souls in God, you find a sad in
n *Moses*, *Numb.* 11 22 23. After
ious acts and triumphs of his Fai
is heels tripped up by diffidence
fterwards; good men ma

ficult providences and made to ſtagger. The *ſraelites* had lived upon miracles many years; yet *Pſalm.* 78. 20. *Can he give bread alſo?* Good *Martha* objects a difficulty to Chriſt, *John* 11. 29. *By this time he ſtinketh.* O 'tis a glorious ing to give God the glory of his Almighty- er, in difficult caſes that we cannot com- d. See *Zech.* 8. 6. *If it be marvellous in f the remnant of this people in theſe dayes, e alſo marvellous in mine eyes? ſaith the oſts.* Difficulties are for men, but not becauſe it is marvellous in your eyes, ſo in Gods: Various objections will ariſe in your hearts to drive you out of ır refuge. As,

jection. O but the long continuance of les and diſtreſſes will ſink our very 40. 27. *Why ſayeſt thou, O* Jacob, *and* Iſrael, *my way is hid from the Lord, ement is paſſed over from my God?* O wait upon God without fainting, *he viſion is yet for an appointed time, d of it ſhall ſpeak and not lie: though for it, becauſe it will ſurely come, it y.*

n. O but our former hopes, and ex- f deliverance are fruſtrated, *Jer.* 8. *d for peace, but no good came; and health, and behold trouble.*

t yet be not diſcouraged, ſee how begins the 69. *Pſal.* with *trembling,* th *triumph*; the husband man wait-

3. Objecti-

3. *Objection.* But there is no ſign or appearance of our deliverance.

Sol. What then this is no new thing, *Pſal.* 74. 9 *We ſee not our ſigns, there is no more any Prophet, neither is there any among us that knoweth how long.*

4. *Objection.* But all things work contrary to our hope.

Sol. Why, ſo did things with *Abraham*, yet ſee, *Rom.* 4 18 *againſt hope, he believed in hope.*

3 Obſerve further with delight the out goings and glorious workings of Divine power for you, and for the Church in times of trouble; this is ſweet entertainment for your Souls, his food for Faith, *Pſal.* 74 14. *Thou breakeſt the heads of the* Leviathan *in pieces, and gaveſt him to be meat to the people inhabiting the wilderneſs*, and here I beſeech you behold and admire,

1. It's myſterious and admirable protection of the Saints in all their dangers. They feed as Sheep in the midſt of Wolves, *Luke* 10. 3. they lie among them that are ſet on fire. *Pſal.* 57. 4. *Their habitation is in the midſt of deceit, Jer* 9. 6. Yet they are kept in ſafety by the mighty power of God.

2. Behold and admire it in caſting the bonds of reſtraint upon your enemies, that though they would, yet they cannot hurt you; our dangers are viſible, and our fears great, but our ſecurity and ſafety admirable, *Iſa* 51. 13. *Thou haſt feared continually every day, becauſe of the fury of the oppreſſour, as if he were readly to deſtroy; and where is the fury of the oppreſſours.*

3. Behold

3. Behold its opening unexpected, and unlikely refuges and securities for the Saints in their distresses, *Isa.* 16. 4. *Let mine out-casts dwell with thee* Moab, *be thou a covert to them from the face of the spoiler, for the extortioner is at an end, the spoiler ceaseth, the oppressours are consumed out of the land. Rev.* 12 16. *the earth helped the Woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the Dragon cast out of his mouth.*

4. Behold it frustrating all the designs of our enemies against us, *Isa.* 54. 17. *No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper, and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. Behold, I have created the Smith, Isa.* 54. 16 *q. d.* He that created the Smith, can order as he pleaseth the weapon made by him; hence our enemies are not masters of their own designs.

O then depend upon this power of God, for it is your security; there is a twofold dependance, the one Natural & necessary, the other Elective.

1. Natural dependance, so all do and must depend upon him.

2. Elective and voluntary, and so we all ought to depend upon him; and for your encouragement take this Scripture, *Psal.* 9. 9. 10. *The Lord also will be a Refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in the times of trouble, and they that know thy name will put their trust in thee: for thou Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek thee.* And thus of the first Attribute of God, prepared for the safety of his people in times of trouble.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

Opening that glorious Attribute of Divine wiſdom as a ſecond Chamber of ſecurity to the Saints in difficult times.

SECT. I.

THE next Chamber of Divine Protection into which I ſhall lead you, is the *Infinite Wiſdom of God*; I call it the next, becauſe I ſo find it placed in Scripture, *Job* 36. 5. *He is mighty in power and wiſdom, Dan.* 2. 20. *Wiſdom and might are his.*

This Attribute may be fitly called the *Council Chamber of Heaven*; where all things are contrived in deepeſt wiſdom, which are afterwards wrought in the world by power. *Eph.* 1. 11. *He worketh all things after the Counſel of his own will.* Counſel in the Creature implies weakneſs and defect; we are not able at one thought to fathom the depth of a buſineſs, and therefore muſt deliberate and ſpend many thoughts about it, and when we have ſpent all our own thoughts we are oft times at a loſs, and muſt borrow help, and ask counſel of others; but in God it notes the perfection of his underſtanding, for as thoſe acts of the creature which are the reſults of deliberation and counſel, are the hight and top of all rational contrivement; ſo in its accommodation to God, it notes the excellent reſults of his infinite and moſt perfect underſtanding.

Now this wisdom of God is to be considered, either,

Absolutely, or, Relatively.

1. Absolutely in it self, and so it is, *That whereby he most perfectly and exactly knows himself, and all things without himself, ordering and disposing them in the most convenient manner to the glory of his own name.*

Wisdom comprehends two things, 1. Knowledge of the natures of things, which in the creature, is called *Science.* 2 Knowledge how to govern, order and dispose them, which in the Creature is called *Prudence*; these things in man are but faint shadows of that which is in God in the most absolute perfection; he fully knows himself, for his understanding is infinite, *Psal.* 147. 5. And the thoughts he thinks towards us, *Jer.* 29. 11. And as he perfectly understands himself, so likewise all things that are without himself, *Acts* 15. 18. *Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.* Together with all the secret designs, thoughts, and purposes which lie hid from all others in the inmost recesses of mens hearts, *Psal.* 139. 2.

And as he perfectly knows all things, so he fully understands how to govern and direct them to the best end, even the exalting of his own praise, *Psal.* 104 24 *Rom.* 11. 36. *for of him, and through him, and to him are all things.* Of him as the *efficient cause*; through him, as the *conserving cause*; and to him as the *final cause*: And in this wise disposition of all things, he hath a gracious respect to the good of his chosen, *Rom.* 8. 28. *A*

28. *All things shall work together for good to them that love God:* More particularly, the wisdom of God is to be considered by us in its excellent properties, amongst which these four following are eminently conspicuous, as it is the,

1. Original. 2. Essential. 3. Perfect, and 4. Only wisdom.

1. The wisdom of God is the Original wisdom, from which all the wisdom found in Angels or men is derived, and unto that fountain we are directed to go, for supplies of wisdom, *Jam.* 1. 5. *If any man lack wisdom, let him ask it of God.* There is indeed a spirit in man, but it is the inspiration of the Almighty that giveth understanding. *Job* 32 8. The natural faculty is ours, but the illumination thereof is Gods; the understanding of the Creature is as the *Dial* which signifies nothing, till the Sun shine upon it.

2. Gods Wisdom is Essential Wisdom, Wisdom in the Creature is but a quality separable from the subjects; but in God it is his Nature, his very Essence, he can as soon cease to be God, as to be most wise.

3 The Wisdom of God is perfect wisdom, full of it self, and exclusive of its contrary; the wisest of men are not wise at all times, the greatest wits are not without some mixture of madness; it is an high attainment in humane wisdom to understand our own weakness and folly; the deepest heads are but shallow, but the wisdom of God is an unsearchable depth, *Rom.* 11. 33 *O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God, how unsearchable are his judge-*

ments, and his ways paſt finding out?

4. To conclude, the wiſdom of God is the only wiſdom; there is no wiſdom without him, none againſt him, he is the only wiſe God, *Jude verſ.* 25.

2. The wiſdom of God muſt be conſidered *Relatively*, and that in a double reſpect:

1. To his Promiſes. 2. To his Providences.

SECT. II.

LET us view it in its relation to the Promiſes, where you ſhall find it made over by God to his people for diverſe excellent uſes, and purpoſes in times of diſtreſs and danger. As,

1. It is made over to them in Promiſes for their direction and guidance when they know not what to do, or which way to take: So *Pſal.* 25. 9. *The meek will he guide in judgement, and the meek will he teach his way,* And Iſa 58. 11. *The Lord ſhall guide thee continually.* And *Pſal.* 32. 8. *I will guide thee with mine eye.* And with this the *Pſalmiſt* encourages himſelf, *Pſal.* 73. 24. *Thou ſhalt guide me with thy counſel, and afterwards receive me to glory.* O what an invaluable mercy is this! we ſhould make Shipwrack both of our Temporal and Eternal mercies quickly, were it not for guidance of Divine Wiſdom.

2. To Extricate them when involved in difficulties: So 2 *Pet.* 2. 9. *The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation.* They know not how, but their God doth; they are often at a loſs, but he is never: So 1 *Cor.* 10. 13. *There hath*

hath no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man, but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape that ye may be able to bear it.

3. To over rule and order all their troubles to their good, and real advantage: So runs that most comprehensive promise, *Rom.* 8. 28. *All things shall work together for good to them that love God.* In the faith whereof *Paul* concludes, *Phil.* 1 19. Even this shall work for his Salvation. Thus the people of God were sent into captivity for their good, *Jer.* 24. 8. and *Joseph* into *Egypt*, *Gen.* 50. 20. *Ye thought evil against me, but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass as it is this day, to save much people alive.*

2. Let us view the Wisdom of God in its Relation to his Providences, for there it shines forth eminently, *Ezek.* 1. 18. The wheels were full of eyes, *i. e.* the motions and Providential revolutions in this lower world, are very Judicious and advised motions, *Non cæco impetu volvuntur rotæ*, it hath a fetch and design which no man understands till it open it self in the event.

The enemies of the Church are oft times men of the finest brains, and deepest policies: *Herod* a Fox for subtility, *Luke* 13. 32. *Julian* and *Ahitophel*, with many others who have digged as deep as Hell in their counsels, and laid their designs so sure, that they doubted not but to be masters of it, yet their hands could not perform their enterprize.

The wisdom of Providence hath still befooled

them, and baffled the cunningest head-pieces that ever undertook any design against the Church, as fast as ever they arose; and here the Wisdom of Providence is remarkable in three things especially.

1. In revealing and discovering the secret conspiracies and counsels of the Churches enemies, and thereby frustrating their designs, *Gen.* 27.41, 42. *Providence* (as one calls it,) is the Bird of the air that carries tidings, and whiles deeds of darkness, *Job.* 12.22. *He discovereth deep things out of darkness, and bringeth out to light the shadow of death.* And this God hath done both *immediately and mediately.* 1. Immediately, 2 *Kings* 6.11. What counsel soever the King of *Syria* took in his bed chamber was still discovered by the LORD to the Prophet. So true is that, *Job* 34.22. *There is no darkness nor shadow of death where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves.* Thus the design of *Herod* is revealed to *Joseph* in a dream.

But commonly he doth it by means; as

1. By giving knowledge of it to some that are under obligations of duty, or affection to reveal it to these that are concerned in the danger. So *Paul's* Sisters Son, *Acts* 23 16. revealed the conspiracy against his life, and so the Plot miscarried by revealing it before it was ripe for execution.

2. By the failure of some circumstance the whole is brought to light: there be many fine threeds upon which the designs of Politicians hang, if one break the whole design is unravelled.

led. Thus the Wisdom of God sometimes prevents his peoples ruine, by taking away the speach of the trusty from him, and making their own tongues to fall upon themselves.

3. By their own confession; So *Psalm* 64. 5. 6, 7, 8. where you have the Plot laid, *ver.* 5. *They encourage themselves in an evil matter, they commune of laying snars privily, they say, who shall see them? The deep contrivance of it, ver.* 6. *They search out iniquity, they accomplish a diligent search; both the inward thoughts of every one of them, and the heart is deep.* Their Plot *destroyed ver.* 7. *But God shall shoot at them with an arrow suddenly shal they be wounded.* The *method* or way of providence in destroying it, *ver* 8. *So they shal make their own tongue to fall upon themselves, all that see them, shall flee away.* Thus hath the Wisdom of our God wrought for us this day beyond all the thoughts of our hearts; & oh that it might make such impressions upon all our hearts, as follow in the 9. and 10. *verses, All men shal fear, and shal declare the work of God, for they shall wisely consider his doing. The righteous shal be glad in the Lord, and shall trust in him, and all the upright in heart shall glory.*

2. The Wisdom of God discovers it self in behalf of that people who are his own, in diverting the danger from them; and putting by the deadly thrusts their enemies make at them; thus it spoils their game by an unforeseen rub in the green; and that especially three ways.

1. By, making their counsels to jar among themselves, in which jars is the sweetest harmo-

ny of providences; thus the counsel of *Ahithophel* jars with the counsel of *Hushai*, 2 *Sam.* 17. 5,7. by which means *David* escaped: the *Pharisees* clashed with the *Sadduces*, *Acts* 23. 7. and by that means *Paul* escaped.

2. By cutting out other works, and starting some new design which like a fresh scent puts the dogs to a loss. Thus the people of God in *Jerusalem* were delivered by a diversion, 2 *Kings* 19. 7. *Behold I will send a blast upon him, and he shall hear a rumour and shall return to his own land, and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land, so* Rabshakeh *returned.* By this means also was *David* delivered from the hand of *Saul* 1 *Sam.* 23.27. And in this method of providence, that Scripture is often fulfilled, *Prov.* 21.18 *The wicked shall be a ransom for the Righteous and the transgressour for the upright.*

3. By cutting off the capital enemies of his Church, by whose seasonable destruction they are delivered. Thus fell *Julian*, that bitter enemy of the Christians, when he was preparing to put his last and most bloody design against them in execution. And thus fell *Haman*, *Nero*, and many more in the very height and heat of their designs against the Church.

4. The wisdom of God gloriously displays it self in causing the designs of the wicked, like a surcharged gun to recoil upon and destroy themselves: It often falls out with the undermining enemies of the Church, as it sometimes doth with them that dig deep mynes in the earth, who are destroyed and buried in their own work:

Psal.

Psal. 9. 15. 16. *The Heathen are sunk down in the pit that they made, in the net which they hid is their own foot taken. The Lord is known by the judgments which he executeth, the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands Higgajon, Selah.* There is a double mercy in this providence, one in the delivering the Saints from the danger, the other in causing it to fall upon the contrivers, and is therefore celebrated with a double note of attention: in these observable strokes, the righteousness of God shines forth, in repaying his peoples enemies in their own coin.

-----nec lex est justior ulla,
quam necis Artifices arte perire suâ.

Thus *Haman* did eat the first fruits of that tree which his own hands planted, and thus *Jerusalem* becomes a burthensome stone to all that burthen themselves with it, *Zech.* 12. 3.

4. Admire and adore the wisdom of your GOD, in those great and unexpected advantages, which arise to you out of those very dangers and designs of your enemies that threatned your ruine: the very hands of your very enemies are sometimes made the instruments of your advancement and enlargement: your persecutions become you priviledges, the Moto of the *Palm* tree fitly becomes yours, *Suppressa Resurgo.*

In three things the wisdom of God makes advantage out of your troubles.

1. In fortifying your Souls and Bodies with suitable strength, when any eminent trials intend-

ed for you: So it was with the Apostles, 2 Cor. 1. 5 *As the sufferings of Christ abound in us so our consolation by Christ*, God lays in suitably to what men lay on mercilesly: Christ would not draw the poor timorous disciples out of *Jerusalem* unto hard encounters, until first he had endued them with power from on high, *Luke* 24. 49.

2. The wisdom of your God can, and often doth, make your very troubles and sufferings instead of so many ordinances to strengthen your Faith, and fortify your Patience. So the heads of *Leviathan* became meat to his people inhabiting the Wilderness; *Psal.* 74. 14. And so the Plots of *Balak* and *Balaam*, were designed by God, to be as a standing instructing ordinance for the encouragment of his peoples faith in future difficulties *Micah.* 6. 5 *O my people remember now what* Balak *King of* Moab *consulted, and what* Balaam *the son of* Beor *answered him from* Shittim *unto* Golgal *that ye may know the righteousness of the Lord. q. d.* You cannot but remember how those your enemies courted me with multitudes of Offerings to deliver you up into their hands, and how faithfully I stood by you in all those dangers, that Plot discovered at once the policy of your enemies, and the righteousness of your God.

3. His wisdom is discovered to your advantage in permitting your dangers to grow to an extremity, on purpose to magnifie his goodness, and increase your comfort in your deliverance from it. *Psal.* 126. 1. *When the Lord turned our captivity*

captivity we were as them that dreamed. Proportionable to the greatneſs of your dangers will your joyes be.

SECT. III.

WEll then, if the wiſdom of God ſhines forth ſo glorioufly in the times of his peoples troubles: be perſwaded by Faith to enter into this Chamber alſo: it is a Chamber where a believing Soul may enjoy the ſweeteſt reſt: and quietneſs in the moſt hurring and diſtracting times; shut the door behind you, and improve this Attribute to your beſt advantage.

1. Enter into this Chamber by Faith, believe firmly that the management of all the affairs of this world, whether publick or perſonal, is in the hands of your All-wiſe God: more particularly, exerciſe your faith about the Wiſdom of God in theſe things.

1. Believe that the Wiſdom of God can contrive and order the way of your eſcape and deliverance, when all doors of hope are ſhut up to ſenſe and reaſon: we know not what to do, ſaid good *Jehoshaphat*, but our eyes are unto thee. *q. d.* Lord though I am at a loſs and ſee no way of eſcape, thou art never at a loſs. The *Lord* (ſaith *Peter*) knoweth how to deliver the Godly out of temptation: Divine wiſdom hath infinite methods and wayes of deliverance unknown to men, till they are opened in the event.

2. Believe that the Wiſdom of God can turn your greateſt troubles and fears into the choiceſt bleſſings and mercies to you: I know (ſaith *Paul*)

Paul) that this shall turn to my Salvation, *Phil.* 1. 19. meaning his bonds and sufferings for Christ Divine wisdom can give you honey out of the carcase of the Lyon, cause you to part with those afflictions, admiring and blessing God for them, which you met with, fear and trembling, as suspecting your destruction was imported in them.

3. In consideration of both these, resign up your selves to the wisdom of God, and lean not to your own understandings; *commit thy way unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established, Prov.* 16. 3. When the *Melancthon* was oppressed with cares and doubts about the distracting affairs of the Church in his time: *Luther* thus chides him out of his despondency, *Desinet Philippus esse rector mundi*, do not thou presume to be the Governour of the world: but leave the reins of Government in his hand that made it, and best knows how to rule it: let God alone to chuse thy lot and portion, to order thy condition, and manage all thy affairs, and let thy Soul take its rest in this quiet Chamber of Divine Wisdom But then.

2. Be sure to shut thy door behind thee, and beware lest unbelief, anxities, fears and doubts creep in after thee to disturb thy rest, and shake thy faith in this point: we are apt in two cases to be stumbled in this matter.

1. When subtile and cunning enemies are engaged against us; this was *Davids* case, 2 *Sam.* 15. 31. *One told David, saying, Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absolom: and David*

said

ſaid, O Lord, I pray thee turn the counſel of Ahitophel into foolishneſs. When he heard that *Ahitophel* was with the Conſpirators, it greatly puzled him. Though a whole Conclave of *Politicians* be againſt us, yet if God be with us let us not fear.

2. When our own reaſon intrudes too far, and offers its dictates too boldly in the caſe, we are apt to ſay in the arrogancy of our own reaſon, we cannot be delivered: but O that we would learn to reſign it up to the Wiſdom of GOD. The Lord knows how to deliver the godly. When the queſtion was asked the Prophet, *Ez.* 37. 3. Can theſe dry bones live? He anſwers, Lord thou knoweſt. That's excellent counſel, *Prov.* 3 5. *Truſt in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not to thine own underſtanding.*

3. Improve the Wiſdom of God for your ſelves in all difficult and diſtreſful caſes.

1. Beg of God to exerciſe his wiſdom for you when enemies conſpire againſt you. So did *David*, 2 *Sam.* 15. 31. *Lord turn the counſel of* Ahitophel *into foolishneſs!* O 'tis the nobleſt and ſureſt way to vanquiſh an enemy: it was but asked and done.

2. Comfort your ſelves with this whenever you are at a loſs in your own thoughts, and know not what to do, then commit all to Divine conduct, let GOD ſteer for you in a ſtorm: he loves to be truſted, *Pſal.* 37 5. *Commit thy way unto the Lord, truſt alſo in him, and he ſhall bring it to paſs.*

3. Encourage your ſelves from this when the

Church

Church is in the greatest danger, and most sorely shaken: O that is a blessed promise, *Zech.* 3. 9. *Upon one stone shall be seven eyes.* Meaning Christ, and the Church built on him as the chief corner stone: the seven eyes are the seven eyes of Providence which are never all asleep.

CHAP. VIII.

Opening that glorious Attribute of Divine Faithfulness as a third Chamber of Security to the people of God in times of distress and danger.

SECT. I.

HAving viewed the Saints Refuge in the power and Wisdom of God, we next proceed to a third Chamber of Safety for the Saints refuge. *viz.* The *Faithfulness* of God.

In this Attribute is our Safety and Rest amidst the confusions of the world and dayly disappointments we are vexed withall through the vanity and falseness of the Creature: As to Creatures, the very best of them they are but vanity, yea, vanity of vanity the vainest vanity, *Eccles.* 1. 2. *Every man in his best estate is altogether vanity*, *Psal.* 39. 5. Yea, those that we expect most from, give us most of trouble, *Mic.* 7 5. Neerest Relations bring up the rear of sorrows *Job.* 6. 15. *My brethren have dealt deceitfully as a brook.* Especially their deceit appears most when we have most need of their help, *Ps.* 142. 4. How great a mercy is it then to have a refuge in the Faithfulness of God, as *David* had, *I*

looked

looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me, refuge failed me, no man cared for my ſoul. And likewiſe the Church, *Micah* 7. 7. *I will look unto the Lord, I will wait for the God of my ſalvation, my God will hear me.* A time may come when you ſhall not know where to truſt in all this world: Let me therefore open to you this Chamber of reſt in the Faithfulneſs of God, againſt ſuch a day, and this I ſhall do in a two fold conſideration of it. *viz.*

1. Abſolutely in its own Nature.
2. Relatively in the Promiſes and Providences of God.

1. Abſolutely, and ſo the Faithfulneſs of God is his ſincerity, firmneſs, and conſtancy in performing his word to his people in all times and caſes. So *Moſes* deſcribes him to *Iſrael*, *Deut.* 7. 9. *Know therefore that the Lord thy God, he is God, the faithful God.* And *Joshua* appeals to their experience for the vindication of it, *Josh.* 23. 14. *Ye know in all your hearts, and all your ſouls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God ſpake concerning you; all are come to paſs, and not one thing hath failed thereof.* And it is alſo fully aſſerted, *Jer.* 31. 36, 37. And greatly admired even in the darkeſt day, *Lam.* 3. 23. *Great is thy faithfulneſs.* And it is well for us that his faithfulneſs is great, for great is that weight that leans upon it even all our hopes for both worlds, for this world and for that to come; *Tit.* 1. 2. *In hope of eternal life which God that cannot lie promiſed before the world began.*

It was a very dishonourable character that *Suidas* gave of *Tiberius*, *Eorum quæ appetebat ne quicquam præ se ferebat, & eorum quæ dicebat, ne quicquam facere volebat. i. e.* He never made shew of having what he desired to have, nor ever minded to do what he promised to do: But God is faithful, and that will appear by these following Evidences of it.

1. *Evidence.*

By his exact fulfilling of his promises of the longest date. So *Acts* 7. 6. Four hundred and thirty years were run out before the Promise of *Israel's* deliverance out of *Egypt* was accomplished; yet *Acts* 7.17. when the time of the promise was come, God was punctual to a day: Seventy years in *Babylon*, and at the expiration of that time they returned. 2 *Chron.* 36. 21. Men may forget, but God cannot, *Isa.* 49. 15. 16.

2. *Evidance.*

By making way for his Promise through the greatest difficulties, and seeming impossibilities. So to *Abraham* when old, *Gen.* 18. 13, 14. *Is there any thing too hard for the Lord? At the appointed time will I return unto thee, according to the time of life; and* Sarah *shall have a son.* And likewise to the *Israelites*, Can these dry bones live? *Ezek.* 37. 3. Difficulties are for men, not God, *Gen.* 18. 14. When art thou, O great Mountain, *Zech.* 8. 6. *If it be marvellous in the eyes of the remnant of this people, should it also be marvellous in mine eyes? saith the Lord of hosts.*

3. *Evidence,*

By fulfilling promises to his people, when their hopes

hopes and expectations have been given up. So *Ezek.* 37. 11. Our bones are dry, our hopes lost, we are cut off for our part. And *Isa.* 49. 14. *Zion said, The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me.* There may be much unbelief in good men, their faith may be sorely staggered, yet God is faithful, men may question his promises, yet God cannot deny himself, 2 *Tim.* 2. 13.

4. *Evidence.*

By Gods appealling to his people and referring the matter to their own judgments, *Micah.* 6. 3, 4, 5. *O my people, what have I done unto thee, and wherein have I wearied thee? Testifie against me, for I brought thee up out of the land of* Egypt, *& redeemed thee out of the house of servants, & I sent before thee* Moses, Aaron, *and* Miriam. *O my people, remember now what* Balak *King of* Moab *consulted, and what* Balaam *the son of* Beor *answered him from* Shittim *unto* Gilgal, *that ye may know the righteousness of the Lord. q. d.* If I have failed in a *punctilio* of my promise, shew it; did not *Balak* and *Balaam* court me, and try all wayes to win Me over to them by multitudes of Sacrifices, yet I did not desert you, So *Jer.* 2. 31. *O generation, see ye the word of the Lord have I been a wilderness unto* Israel, *a land of darkness? Wherefore say my people, we are lords, we will come no more unto thee? Isa.* 44. 8.

5. *Evidence.*

The Faithfulness of GOD is abundantly cleared by the constant testimonies given unto it in all Ages by them that have tryed it, they have all

witne[ss]

witnessed for GOD, and attested his unspotted faithfulness to the generations that were to come. So did *Joshua* 23. 14. *All is come to pass*; and so did *Daniel*, *Chap.* 9. 4. *O Lord, the great and dreadful GOD, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love him*: With which *David's* testimony concurs, *Psal.* 146. 6. *Happy is he that hath the God of* Jacob *for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God, which made the heaven and the earth, the sea, and all that therein is, which keepeth truth for ever.* Thus his people have been witnesses in all generations, unto the faithfulness of God in his promises; the consideration whereof leaves no doubt or objection behind it.

SECT. II.

AND if we enquire into the grounds and reasons why *God* is, and ever must be most Faithful in performing his promises, we shall find it is built upon stable and unshaken pillars: *viz.*

1. The Holiness of his Nature.
2. The All-sufficiency of his Power.
3. The Honour of his Name.
4. The Unchangeableness of his Nature.

1. The Faithfulness of God is built upon the perfect holiness of his Nature, by reason whereof it is impossible for God to lie, *Tit.* 1. 2. *Heb.* 6. 18. The deceitfulness of men flows from the corruption of the Humane Nature, but *God is not as man that he should lye, neither as the son of man that he should repent; hath he said, and shall he not do it? Or hath he spoken, and shall he not make*

make it good? Num. 23. 19. If there be no defect in his Beeing, there can be none in his working; if his Nature be pure Holineſs, all his ways muſt be perfect Faithfulneſs.

2. It is built upon the All-ſufficiency of his Power, whatſoever he hath promiſed to his people, he is able to perform it; men ſometimes falſifie their promiſes through the defects of ability to perform them; but God never out promiſed himſelf; if he will work none can letr, *Iſa.* 43. 13. He can do whatſoever he pleaſeth to do *Pſal.* 135. 6. The Holineſs of his Nature engageth, and the Almightineſs of his Power enables him to be Faithful.

3. The Glory and Honour of his Name may aſſure us of his Faithfulneſs in making good the promiſes, and all that good which is in the promiſes to a title; for wherever you find a Promiſe of GOD, you alſo find the Name and Honour of God given as ſecurity for the performance of it; and ſo his name hath ever been pleaded with him by his people, as a mighty argument to work for them, *Joshuah* 7. 9. *What wilt thou do to thy great name? q. d.* Lord thine Honour is a thouſand times more than our lives, it is no ſuch great matter what becomes of us; but ah! Lord it is of infinite concernment that the glory of thy Name be ſecured; and thy faithfulneſs kept pure and unſpotted in the world. So again, *Exod.* 32. 11. 22. *And* Moſes *beſought the Lord his God, and ſaid Lord why doth thy wrath wax hot againſt thy people, which thou haſt brought out of the land of* Egypt, *with great power, & with*

a mig

a mighty hand? Wherefore should the Egyptians *speak and say, for mischief did he bring them out, to slay them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth? turn from thy fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against thy people, q. d.* It will be sad enough for the hands of the *Egyptians* to fall upon thy people, but infinitely worse for the tongues of the *Egyptians* to fall upon thy Name.

4. The unchangeableness of his Nature gives us the fullest assurance of his Faithfulness in the Promises, *Mal.* 3.6. *I am the Lord, I change not, therefore ye sons of* Jacob *are not consumed.* Gods unchangeableness is his peoples indemnity, and best security in the midst of dangers; whilst there is not yea and nay with God, there should be no ups and downs, offs and ons in our faith: that which gives steadiness to the Promises, should give steadiness also to our expectations for the performance of them, and so much briefly of the faithfulness of God absolutely considered in the Nature and grounds of it.

2. Next let us view the Faithfulness of God, as it relates to the many great and precious Promises made unto his people for their security both in their,

1. Temporal, Concernments. 2. Spiritual.

1. We find the Faithfulness of God pawned and pledged for the security of his people in their Spiritual and Eternal concernments, against all their dangers and fears, threatning them on that account, and that more especially in these three respects.

1. I

1. It is given them as their great and beſt ſecurity for the pardon of their ſins, 1 *John* 1. 9. *If we confeſs our ſins he is faithful, and juſt to forgive us our ſins, and to cleanſe us from all unrighteouſneſs.* Our greateſt danger comes from ſin; guilt is a fountain of Fears, a pardoned Soul only can look other troubles in the face boldly: As Guilt breeds Fear, ſo Pardon breeds Courage, and GODS faithfulneſs in the Covenant is as it were that Pardon Office from whence we fetch our diſcharges and acquittances, *Iſai* 43. 25. *I, even I am he, that blotteth out thy tranſgreſſions for mine own ſake* The promiſes of remiſſion are made for Chriſts ſake, and when made they muſt be fulfilled for his own, that is his Faithfulneſs ſake:

2. It is engaged for the perſeverance of the Saints, and their continuance in the ways of God in the moſt hazardous and difficult times; this was the encouragement given them, 1 *Cor.* 1. 8, 9 *Who ſhall alſo confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameleſs in the day of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; God is faithful by whom ye were called unto the fellowſhip of his Son Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.* Ah Lord! might thoſe *Corinthians* ſay, the powers of the World are againſt us, Suffering and Death before us, a Treacherous and fearful heart within us: Ay, but yet fear not, Chriſt ſhall confirm you, whoſoever oppoſes you: though the World and your own hearts be deceitful, yet comfort your ſelves with this, your God is faithful.

3. The Faithfulneſs of GOD is given by pro-

miſe for his peoples ſecurity in, and encouragement againſt all their ſufferings and afflictions in this World. 2 *Theſ.* 3. 2, 3. *That we may be delivered from unreaſonable and wicked men, for all men have not faith; but the Lord is faithful, who ſhall ſtablish you, & keep you from evil.* He prays they may be delivered from abſurd, treacherous and unfaithful men who would trapan and betray them to ruine; but this is propoſed as their relief, that when the treachery of men shal bring them into trouble, the faithfulneſs of God ſhall ſupport them under, and deliver them out of thoſe troubles; they shall have Spiritual ſupports from God, under their deepeſt ſufferings from men, 1 *Pet.* 4. 19.

2. Gods Faithfulneſs is engaged for his peoples indemnity and ſecurity amidſt the Temporal and outward evils whereunto they are liable in this world: and that either to preſerve them from troubles; *Pſal.* 91. 1, 2, 3, 4. or to open a ſeaſonable door of deliverance out of trouble 1 *Cor.* 10. 13 In both or either of which the hearts of Chriſtians may be at reſt in this troubleſome world: for what need thoſe troubles fright us, which either shall never touch us, or if they do, ſhall never hurt, much leſs ruine us.

SECT. III.

HAving taken a short view of Gods Faithfulneſs in the Promiſes, it will be a lovely ſight to take one view of it more as it is actuated, and exerted in his Providences over his people; believe it Chriſtians, the Faithfulneſs of God runs through

though all his works of providence, whenever he goes forth to work in the world, *Faithfulness is the girdle of his loins, Isai.* 11.5. It is an allusion to workmen who going forth in the morning to their labour, gird their loins or reins with a girdle, now there is no work wrought by God in this world, but his faithfulness is as the Girdle of his Loins. The consideration whereof should make the most despondent believer, *gird up the Loins of his mind*, that is, encourage and strengthen his drooping and discouraged heart. Those works of God which are wrought in Faithfulness and in pursuit of his eternal purposes and gracious promises, should rather delight, than affright us in beholding of them. It pluckt out the Sting of *Davids* affliction when he considered it was in very faithfulness, that God had afflicted him, *Psa.* 119.89 90. But more particularly let us behold with delight the faithfulness of God making good six sorts of Promises to his People, in the days of their affliction and trouble, *viz.*

1. The Promises of Preservation,
2. The Promises of Support.
3. The Promises of Direction.
4. The Promises of Provision.
5. The Promises of Deliverance.
6. The Promises of Ordering and Directing the Event to their Advantage.

1. There are promises in the word for your preservation from ruine, and what you read in those promises you dayly see the same fulfilled in your own experiences. You have a promise in *Ps.* 57.3. *He shall send from Heaven, and save*

me from the reproach of him that would swallow me up. Selah. *God shall send forth his mercy and his truth.* Say now, have you not found it so, when Hell hath sent forth its Temptations to defile you? The World its persecutions to destroy your own heart, its unbelieving fears to distract and sink you, hath not your God sent forth also his mercy and his truth to save you; Hath not this truth been your shield and buckler? *Psal.* 91. 4. May you not say with the Church its of his mercy you are not consumed, his mercies are new every morning, and great is his faithfulness, *Lam.* 3. 23.

2. As you have seen it actually fulfilling the promises of your preservation, so you may see it making good all the promises in his word for your support in troubles. That is a sweet promise, *Psal* 91. 15. *I will be with him in trouble I will deliver him,* you have also a very supporting promise in *Isa.* 41. 10. *Fear not thou for I am with thee: be not dismayed for I am thy God I will strengthen thee, yea, I will help thee, yea, I will uphold thee, with the right hand of my righteousness.* O, how evidently hath the faithfulness of God shone forth in the performance of his word to you in this respect! you are his witnesses, you would have sunk in the deep waters of trouble if it had not been so. So speaks *David Psal* 73. 26. *My heart and my flesh faileth, but God is the strength of my heart; and my portion for ever.* Have you not found it so with you as it is in 2 *Cor* 12. 10. *Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecu-*

persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak then am I strong. God's strength hath been made perfect in your weakness, by this you have been carried through all your troubles; hitherto hath he helped you.

3. As you have seen it faithfully fulfilling the promises for your preservation, and support: So you have seen it in the direction of your ways. So runs that promise, *Psal* 32. 8. *I will instruct thee, and teach thee in the way that thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye.* Certain it is *That the way of man is not in himself*, Jer. 10. 23. O how faithfully hath your God guided you, and stood by you in all the difficult cases of your life: Is not that promise, *Heb.* 13 5. faithfully fulfilled to a title, *I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee*? Surely you can set your seal to that in *Joh.* 17. 17. *Thy word is truth*: had you been left to your own counsels you had certainly perished: as it is said of them, in *Psal.* 81 12. *I gave them up unto their own hearts lust: And they walked in their own counsels.*

4. As there are promises in the word for your preservation, support, and direction: So in the fourth place there are promises for your *Provisions*; as in *Ps.* 34. 9. the Lord hath promised, *That they that fear him shall not want.* When they were driven to extremity, he will provide, *Isa.* 41. 17. *When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of* Israel *will not forsake them.* And is not this faithfully performed: *He hath given meat unto them that fear him:*

he will ever be mindful of his Covenant, Psal. 111. 5. In all the exigencies of your lives, you have found him faithful to this day: you are his witnesses that his providences never failed you, his care hath been renewed every morning for you: how great is his faithfulness?

5. You also find in the word some reviving promises for your deliverance. You have a very sweet promise in *Psal.* 91. 14. *Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him*, and again, *Psal.* 50. 15. *Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee*; you have done so, and he hath made a way to escape. Our lives are so many monuments of mercy, we have lived among Lyons, yet preserved, *Psal.* 57. 4. The burning Bush was an emblem of the Church miraculously preserved.

6. There are promises in the word for the ordering and directing all the occurrences of providence to your great advantages: so it is promised, *Rom.* 8. 28. *That all things shall work together for good, to them that love God.* Fear not Christians, however you find it now, whilst you are tossing to and fro upon the unstable waves of this world: you shall find to be sure when you come to heaven, that all the troubles of your lives were guided as steddily by this promise, as ever any Ship at Sea was directed to its Port by the compass or North-Star.

And now what remains, but that I press you as before;

1. To enter into this Chamber of Divine Faithfulness.

2. To

2. Te ſhut the door behind you.

3. And then to live comfortably on it in evil dayes.

1. Enter into this Chamber of God's faithfulneſs by faith, and hide your ſelves there. Every man is a Lye, but God is True, eternally and unchangeably faithful; *O* exerciſe your faith upon it, be at reſt in it!

Now there are two great and weighty Arguments to preſs you to enter into this Chamber of divine faithfulneſs.

1. *Arg.* Is fetched from the nature of GOD who cannot lye, *Titus* 1. 2. *He is not as man, that he ſhould lye,* Numb 23. 19. *Neither the ſon of man that he ſhould repent: hath he ſaid, and ſhall he not do it? Or hath he ſpoken, and ſhall he not make it good?* Remember upon what everlaſting ſteddy grounds; the faithfulneſs of GOD is built. Theſe are immutable things, *Heb* 6. 18. This *Abraham* built upon, *Rom.* 4. 21. *Being fully perſwaded, that what he had promiſed, he was able alſo to perform.* He accounteth him faithful that promited. What would you expect or require in the perſon that you are to truſt? You would.

1. Expect a clear promiſe, and lo, you have a thouſand all the Scripture over; fitted to all the caſes of your Souls and Bodies This you may plead with God, as *David, Pſal.* 119. 49. *Remember the word unto thy Servant, upon which thou haſt cauſed me to hope.* So *Jacob* pleaded, *Gen.* 32. 12. *Thou ſaidſt, I will ſurely do thee good,* theſe are Gods Bonds and Obligations.

2. You would expect sufficient power tō make good what he promiseth. This is in God as a fair foundation of faith, *Isa.* 26 4. *Trust ye in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength*; Because of thy strength we will wait on thee. Creatures cannot, but God can do what he will.

3. You would expect infinite goodness and mercy inclining him to help and save you; Why? So it is here, *Psal.* 130. 7. *Let Israel hope in the Lord, for with the Lord there is mercy: and with him is plenteous redemption.* So *Moses*, *Exod.* 33.18. *I beseech thee, shew me thy glory.* The request was a view of God's Glory, The answer is, my goodness shall pass before thee, which hints to us, that though all God's Attributes be glorious, yet that, he most glories in, is his goodness: And then.

4. You would expect that none of his Promises were ever blotted or stained by his unfaithfulness at any time, and so it is here, *Josh.* 23. 14. *not one thing hath failed*, all are come to pass, all ages have sealed this conclusion, *Thy word is truth, thy word is truth.*

2. *Arg.* Besides all this you have the encouragement of all former experiences both others and your own, as a second Argument to press you to enter into this Chamber of safety, the Faithfulness of God.

1. You have the experiences of others, Saints have reckoned the experiences of others that lived a thousand years before them, as excellent arguments to quicken their Faith. So *Hos.* 12. 4. He had power over the Angel and prevailed, he

found him in *Bethel* and there he spake, Remember there was a *Joseph* with us in Prison, a *Jeremy* in the Dungeon, a *Daniel* in the Den a *Peter* in Chains, an *Hezekiah* upon the brink of the Grave; and they all found the help of God most faithfully protecting them and saving them in all their troubles Suitable to this is that in *Psal.* 22. 4, 5. *Our fathers trusted in thee; they trusted and thou deliveredest them, they cried unto thee and were delivered, they trusted in thee and were not confounded.*

2. Your own experiences may encourage your faith: So *David* did, 1 *Sam.* 17. 37. *The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the Lyon, and out of the paw of the Bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine.* So did *Paul's* experience encourage his Faith, in 2 *Cor.* 1. 10. *Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver; in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us.* Thus enter into the *faithfulness* of God by Faith.

2. Let me beg you to be sure to shut the doors behind you, against all unbelieving doubts; jealousies, and suspicions of the faithfulness of God; the best men may find temptations of that nature; so did good *Asaph* though an eminent Saint, *Ps* 77. 78. *Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will he be favourable no more? Is his mercy clean gone for ever? Doth his promise fail for ever more?* These jealousies are apt to creep in upon the minds of men, especially when,

1. God delays to answer our prayers as soon as we expect the return of them, we are all in

haſte for a ſpeedy anſwer, forgetting that ſeaſons of prayer are our ſeed-times; and when we have ſown that precious ſeed, we muſt wait for the Harveſt, as the Husbandman doth. Even a precious *Heman* may find a faint qualm of unbelief and deſpondency ſeizing him by the long ſuſpenſions of Gods anſwers, *Pſal.* 88 9, 10, 11. 2. 'Twill be hard to shut thee door upon unbelief, when all things in the eye of our ſenſe and reaſon ſeem to work againſt the Promiſe. It will require an *Abraham's* Faith at ſuch a time to glorifie *God* by believing in hope againſt hope, *Rom.* 4. 18. If ever thou hop'ſt to enjoy the ſweet repoſe and reſt of a Chriſtian in evil times, thou muſt reſolve whatever thine eyes do ſee, or thy ſenſes report, to hold faſt this as a moſt ſure concluſion; God is faithful, and his word is ſure, and that although *Clouds and darkneſs be round about him, yet righteouſneſs and judgement are the habitation of his Throne*, P*ſal.* 97. 2.

O that you would once learn to keep houſe upon Gods Faithfulneſs, and fetch your dayly reliefs and ſupports thence, whenſoever you are preſſed and aſſaulted; either,

1. By Spiritual troubles; When you walk in darkneſs and have no light, then you are to live by acts of truſt and recumbency upon the moſt faithful One, *Iſai.* 50. 10. Or,

2. By Temporal diſtreſſes, ſo did the people of God of old *Hab.* 3. 17, 18. He lived by faith on this Attribute when all viſible comforts and ſupplies were out of ſight.

But eſpecially let me warn and caution you againſt

againſt five principal enemies, to your repoſe upon the Faithfulneſs of GOD, *Viz.*

1. Diſtracting cares, which divided the mind, and eat out the peace and comfort of the heart, and which is worſt of all, they reflect very diſhonourably upon GOD, who hath pledged his Faithfulneſs and Truth for our ſecurity: againſt which I pray you bar the door by thoſe two Scriptures, *Phil.* 4. 6. *Be careful for nothing but in every thing by prayer and ſupplication with thanksgiving, let your requeſts be made known unto GOD.* And that in 1 *Pet.* 5. 7. *Caſting all your care upon him, for he careth for you.*

2. Bar the door againſt unchriſtian deſpondency, another enemy to the ſweet repoſe of your Souls in this comfortable and quiet Chamber of Divine Faithfulneſs: you will find this unbecoming & uncomfortable diſtemper of mind, inſinuating and creeping in upon you, except you believe and reaſon it out, as *David* did, *Pſal.* 42. 11 *Why art thou caſt down O my ſoul, and why diſquieted within me? Hope thou in God for I ſhall yet praiſe him.*

3. Bar the door of your heart againſt carnal policies and ſinful ſhifts, which war againſt your own faith, and Gods Faithfulneſs, as much as any other enemy whatſoever. This was the fault of good *David* in a day of trouble, 1 *Sam.* 27. 1. *And* David *ſaid in his heart, I ſhall now periſh one day by the hand of* Saul; *there is nothing better for me than that I ſhould ſpeedily eſcape into the land of the* Philiſtines. Alas poor *David*, nothing better than this? Time was when thou

couldst think on a better way, when thou couldst say *at what time I am afraid I will trust in thee.* How dost thou forget thy self in this strait? Doth thy old refuge in GOD fail thee now? Can the *Philistines* secure thee better than the *promises*? Wilt thou fly from thy best friend, to thy worst enemies? but what need we wonder at *David*, who find the same distemper almost unavoidable to our selves in like cases?

4. Shut the door against discontents at, and murmurings against the dispensations of providence, what ever you feed or fear; I perswade you not to a *Stoical Apathy*, and senselesness of of the evils of the times, that would preclude the exercise of Patience: If the Martyrs had all had the dead palsie before they came to the fire, their Faith and Patience had not triumphed so gloriously as they did: but on the contrary, beware of grudgings against the ways & will of GOD, than which nothing militates more against your Faith and the peace and quietness of your hearts.

5. To conclude shut the door against all suspicions and jealousies of the firmness and stability of the promises, when you find all sensible comforts shaking and trembling under your feet have a care of such dangerous questions as that, *Psal.* 77 8. *Doth his promise fail*? These are the things which undermine the foundation both of your faith and comfort.

3. In a word, Having sheltered your Souls in this Chamber of rest, and thus shut the doors behind you: all that you have to do, is to take your rest in God, and enjoy the pleasure of a resigned

ſigned Soul into the hands of a Faithful Creator by oppoſing the Faithfulneſs of God, to all the fickleneſs and unfaithfulneſs you will daily find in men, *Mica.* 7.6, 7. Yea to the weakneſs and fading of your own natural ſtrength and ability, *Pſal.* 73. 26. *My fleſh and my heart faileth, but God is the ſtrength of my heart and my portion for ever.* And ſo much of the *Third Chamber* prepared for Believers in the Name of their God.

CHAP. IX.

Opening to Believers the Unchangeableneſs of God, as a Fourth Chamber of Refuge and Reſt in times of trouble.

SECT. I.

IT is ſaid, *Prov.* 9. 1. *Wiſdom hath builded her houſe, ſhe hath hewn out her ſeven pillars.* (*i. e.*) She hath raiſed her whole building upon ſolid and ſtable foundations, for indeed the ſtrength of every building is according to the ground work upon which it is erected, *Debile fundamentum fallit opus.* The wiſdom and Love of God have built an houſe for a refuge and Sanctuary to Believers in tempeſtuous and evil times, containing many pleaſant and comfortable Chambers prepared for their lodgings, till the calamities be overpaſt: three of them have been already opened, *viz.* The Power, Wiſdom, and Faithfulneſs of God.

The laſt of which leads into a fourth much like unto it, namely the *Unchangeableneſs of God*;

wherein his people may find as much reſt and comfort amidſt the viciſſitudes of this unſtable World, as in any of the former. This world is compared, *Rev.* 15. 2. to *A ſea of glaſs mingled with fire.* A Sea for its turbulency and inſtability, a Sea of glaſs for the brittleneſs and frailty of every thing in it; and a Sea of glaſs mingled with fire, to repreſent the ſharp ſufferings and fiery trials, with which the Saints are exerciſed here below. The only ſupport and comfort we have againſt the fickleneſs and inſtability of the Creature, is the Unchangeableneſs of God. There is a two-fold changeableneſs in the Creature:

1. Natural, the effect of Sin.
2. Sinful, in its own Nature.

1. Natural, let in by the fall upon all the Creation; by reaſon whereof the ſweeteſt Creature is but a fading flower, *Pſal.* 102. 26. Time like a Moth frets out the beſt wrought garment with which we cloath and deck our ſelves in this World, *Temporalia rapit tempus.* Our moſt pleaſant enjoyments, Wives: Children, Eſtates, like the Gourd in which *Jonas* ſo delighted himſelf, may wither in a night; Sin rings theſe changes all the world over.

2. Sinful, from the falſeneſs, inconſtancy, deceitfulneſs of the Creature: *Solomon* puts a hard queſtion which may poſe the whole world to anſwer it, *Prov.* 20. 6. *A faithful man who can find?* The meaning is a man of perfect and univerſal Faithfulneſs, is a *Phœnix* ſeldom or never to be found in this world: for when a queſtion

in

in Scripture is moved and let fall again without any anſwer, then the ſence is Negative; but though the believer deſpair of finding an unchangeable man, it is his happineſs and comfort to find an Unchangeable God.

The Unchangeableneſs of God will appear three ways.

1. By Scripture Emblems.
2. By Scripture Aſſertions.
3. By convincing Arguments.

1. By Scripture *Emblems*, remarkable to this purpoſe is that place, *James* 1. 17. Where God is called *The Father of lights, with whom is no variableneſs, neither ſhadow of turning*. No variableneſs the word is, παραλλαγη an Aſtronomical term, commonly applyed to the Heavenly Bodies which have their *Parallaxes i. e.* their Declinations, Revolutions, Viciſſitudes Eclipſes, Increaſes and Decreaſes: but God is a Sun that never riſes nor ſets, but is everlaſtingly and unchangeably one and the ſame: with him is no variableneſs nor ſhadow of turning, τροπῆς ἀποσκίασμα. The Son in its *Zenith* caſts no ſhadow it is the *Tropick*, or turning of its courſe, that cauſes the ſhadow, the very *ſubſtance* of turning is with man, but not the leaſt *ſhadow* of turning with God. And in *Deut.* 32. 4. *Moſes* tells us, *God is a rock, and his work is perfect*. And indeed perfect working neceſſarily follows a perfect Beeing: Now there is nothing found in Nature more ſolid, fixed, and immutable, than a rock: the firmeſt buildings will decay, a few ages will make them a ruinous heap, but though

one age paſs away and another comes, the rocks abide where, and what they were; *Our God is the rock of ages*; and yet one ſtep higher, in *Zech.* 6. 1. His decrees and purpoſes are called Mountains of Braſs, that is, moſt firm, durable, and unchangeable purpoſes: Thus the Immutability of God is ſhadowed forth to us in Scripture Emblems.

2. The ſame alſo you will find in plain poſitive Scripture Aſſertions, ſuch are theſe that follow, *Mal.* 3. 6. *I am the Lord, I change not, therefore ye ſons of* Jacob *are not conſumed* And *Job.* 23. 13. *He is in one mind, and who can turn him?* Men are in one mind to day, and another to morrow, the winds are not more variable than the minds of men: But God is in one mind, the purpoſes of his heart never change. *Thou art the ſame*, or as ſome tranſlate, *Thou art thy ſelf for ever*, *Pſal.* 102. 27. Thus when *Moſes* deſired to know his name that he might tell *Pharaoh* from whom he came: the anſwer is, *I am hath ſent me*, *Exod.* 3. 14. not I was, or I will be, but *I am that I am*, noteing the Abſolute unchangeableneſs of his Nature.

3. The Unchangeableneſs of God is fully proved by convincing arguments which Divines commonly draw from ſuch *Topicks* as theſe, *viz.*

1. The Perfection of his goodneſs.
2. The Purity of his Nature,
3. The Glory of his Name.

1. *Arg.* From the Perfection of his Goodneſs and Bleſſedneſs, God is *Optimus Maximus*, the beſt and chieſeſt good, and in that ſenſe, *There*

is

is none good but one which is God, Mark 10. 18. From whence it is thus argued, If there be any change in *God*, that change muſt either be for the better, or for the worſe, or into a ſtate equal with that he poſſeſſed before.

But not for the better, for then he could not be the chief good; nor for the worſe, for then he muſt ceaſe to be God, the perfection of whoſe Nature is perfectly exclusive of all defects; nor into an equal ſtate of goodneſs with that he poſſeſſed before: that notion would involve *Polytheiſm* and ſuppoſe two Firſt and equal Beeings, beſides the vainity of ſuch a change would be abſolutely repugnant to the wiſdom of God.

Therefore with the Father of lights can be no variableneſs nor shadow of turning.

2. *Arg.* The Unchangeableneſs of God may be evinced from the Purity, ſincerity, and uncompoundneſs of his Beeing, in which there neither is, nor can be the leaſt mixture, he being a pure act. From whence it is thus argued;

If there be any change in God, that change muſt be made either by ſomething without himſelf, or by ſomething within himſelf, or by both together.

But it cannot be by any thing without himſelf: for in him all created dependent Beeings live and move, and enjoy the Beeings they have: and all the changes that are among them, are from the pleaſure of this unchangeable Beeing, he changeth them, but it is not poſſible for him, upon whoſe pleaſure they ſo intirely and abſolutely depened, both as to their Beeings, and workings to ſuffer

any

any change himſelf from, or by them.

Nor can any ſuch change be made upon God by any thing within himſelf: for that would ſuppoſe action and paſſion, *movens & motum* a mixture and compoſition in his Nature, which is abſolutely rejected and excluded by the ſimplicity and purity thereof: ſeeing therefore it can neither be from any power without him, nor any mixture within him, there can be no change at all made on him.

3. *Arg.* That is by no means to be aſcribed to God, which at once eclipſes the glory of his name, and overthrows the hopes and comforts of all his people.

But ſo would the ſuppoſition of mutability in God do, this would level him with the vain changeable creature: whereas it is a principal part of his glory, that *he is not as man that he ſhould lie, neither the ſon of man that he ſhould repent. Num.* 23 19. This alſo would overthrow the hopes and comforts of all his people, which are built upon this Attribute as upon their ſtable and ſolid foundation: Among diverſe others we find three principal priviledges of the people of God, built upon his Immutability, *viz.*

1. Their Perſeverance in Grace.
2. Their Comfort in the Promiſes.
3. Their Hopes of Eternal Life.

1. Their perſeverance in Grace is built upon the foundation of Gods unchangeableneſs: one main reaſon why Chriſtians never repent of their choice of Chriſt and the ways of Godlineſs, is becauſe the giſts and calling of God are without

out repentance, *Rom.* 11. 29. Should God but once repent of the gifs of grace he hath bestowed on us, and alter in his love towards us, how soon would our love to God, and delight in God vanish, as the image in the glass doth when the man that looked upon it hath once turned away his face?

2. All their comfort in the promises is built upon Gods unchangeableness. The promises are the springs of consolation; should they fail and dry up, the whole world could not afford them one drop of Spiritual comfort to refresh their thirsty Souls; the strength of our consolation immediately results from the stability and firmness of the Scripture promises, *Heb.* 6 18.

3. Their hopes of eternal life depends upon the unchangeableness of God that hath promised, *Tit.* 1. 2. *In hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie, promised before the world began.* Take away then the Immutability of God, and you at once darken and eclipse his glory, and overturn the perseverance, consolations, and hopes of all his people; but blessed be God these things are built upon firm foundations.

1. His Nature is unchangeable, *Thou art the same for ever, Psal.* 102. 27. The Heavens though they be the purest, and therefore the most durable and unchangeable part of the creation; yet they shall perish and wax old, and be changed as a vesture, but our God is the same for ever.

2. His power is unchangeable, *Isa* 59. 1. *The Lords hand is not shortened.* Time will enfeeble the strongest creature, and cut short the power

of

of the hands of the mighty, they cannot do in their decrepit age as they were wont to do in their youthful and vigorous age; but the Lords hand never is, nor can be shortned.

3. The counsels and purposes of his heart are unchangeable, *Psal.* 33, 11. *The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations.*

4 The goodness, truth, and mercy of God are Unchangeable, *Psal.* 100. 5. *The Lord is good his mercy is everlasting, and his truth endureth to all generations.*

5. The word of God is unchangeable, though all flesh be as grass, and the goodness thereof as the flower of the field, yet the word of our God shall stand for ever; all the promises contained therein are sure and stedfast: Not yea and nay, but yea and Amen for ever, 2 *Cor.* 1. 20.

6. The love of God is an Unchangeable love, *Jer.* 31. 3. *Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love.*

7. In a word, all the gracious Pardons of God are unchangeable, as they are full without exceptions, so they are final Pardons without any revocation. *I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their iniquities and sins will I remember no more, Heb.* 8. 12. And thus much briefly of Gods unchangeableness absolutely considered in it self.

SECT. II.

LEt us next consider, and believingly view the Unchangeableness of God in its respect and relation.

1. To his Promises.
2. To his Providences.

1. The Immutability of God gives down its comforts to Believers through the Promises, there is no other way by which they can have a comfortable admission into this Chamber or Attribute of God; and there are six sorts of promises in the word: by which it is highly improvable to their support and comfort in an evil day. For, 1. The unchangeable *God* hath engaged himself by promise to be with his people in all times and in all streights, *Heb*, 13.5. *I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.* The life joy, and comfort of a Believer lies in the bosom of that Promise, the conclusion of Faith from thence is sweet and sure; If I shall never be forsaken of my God, let Hell and Earth do their worst, I can never be miserable.

2. The Unchangeable God hath promised to maintain their graces, and thereby his interest in them for ever, *Jer.* 32. 40. *And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.* Where the Lord undertakes for both parts in the Covenant, his own and theirs: I will not turn away from them, O unexpressible mercy! Yea, but Lord, may the poor Believer say, that is not so much my fear, as that my treacherous heart will turn away from thee. No, saith, God I will take care for that also: I will put my fear into thy heart, and thou shalt never depart from me.

3. The

3. The Unchangeable God hath promiſed to eſtabliſh the Covenant with them for ever; ſo that thoſe who are once taken into that gracious Covenant ſhall never be turned out of it again, *Iſa.* 54 10. *The mountains ſhall depart, and the hills be removed, but my kindneſs ſhall not depart from thee, neither ſhall the covenant of my peace be removed, ſaith the Lord that hath mercy on thee.*

4. The Unchangeable *God* hath ſecured his loving kindneſs to his people by promiſe under all the tryals, and ſmarting rods of afflictions, with which he chaſtens them in this world; he hath reſerved to himſelf the liberty of afflicting them, but bound himſelf by promiſe never to remove his favour from them, *Pſal.* 89. 33, 34. *I will viſit their tranſgreſſion with the rod, and their iniquity with ſtripes, nevertheleſs my loving kindneſs will I not take from them, nor ſuffer my faithfulneſs to fail.*

5. The promiſes of a joyfull reſurrection from the dead are grounded upon the Immutability of God, *Mat.* 22. 32. *I am the God of* Abraham, *the God of* Iſaac, *and the God of* Jacob; *God is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living.* Death hath made a great change upon them, but none upon their God: though they be not, he is ſtill the ſame, therefore they are not loſt in death; but ſhall aſſuredly be found again in the reſurrection.

6. To conclude, the promiſes of the Saints eternal happineſs with God in heaven, are founded in his Immutabillity, 1 *Cor.* 1 8, 9. *Tit.* 1. 2.

By

By all which you ſee what a pleaſant lodging is prepared for the Saints in the unchangeable promiſes of God, amidſt all the changes and alterations here below.

2. Once more, let us view the unchangeableneſs of God in his Providences towards his people, what ever changes it makes upon us, or whatever changes we ſeem to diſcern in it, nothing is more certain than this, that it holds one and the ſame tenor, purſues one and the ſame deſign in all that it doth upon us, or about us. Providences indeed are very variable, but the deſigns and ends of God in them all are invariable, and the ſame for ever. It is noted in *Ezek.* 1. 12. that *The wheels went ſtraight forward, whither the ſpirit was to go, they went, and they turned not when they went.* As it is in Nature ſo in Providence, you have one day fair, halcyon, and bright, another dark and full of ſtorm, one ſeaſon hot, and another cold; but all theſe ſerve to one and the ſame end and deſign to make the earth fruitful; and the aim of all providences is to make you holy and happy: That is a ſweet Promiſe, *Rom.* 8. 28 *All things ſhall work together for good to them that love God.* This is the compaſs by which all Providences ſteer their courſe, as a Ship at Sea, doth by the *Oard*; but more particularly, let us note the unchangeableneſs of God in his Providences of all kinds, *effective* and *permiſſive*, and ſee in them all his unchangeable righteouſneſſe and goodneſs.

1. It muſt needs be ſo, conſidering the unchangeableneſs of his decree, 2. *Tim.* 2. 19. *The foundation*

foundation of GOD ſtandeth ſure. Providences ſerve, but never fruſtrate, execute but cannot make void the decree; ſo that you may ſay of the moſt afflicting Providences, as *David* doth of the ſtormy winds, *Pſal.* 148. 8. they all fulfil his word.

2. The Wiſdom of GOD proves it, he will not ſuffer his works or permiſſions to claſh with his deſigns and purpoſe: Divine Wiſdom ſhews it ſelf in the ſteddy direction of all things to the ultimate end. To open this in ſome particulars, conſider,

1. Doth the Lord permit wicked men to rage, and inſult, perſecute, and vex his people? Yet all this while Providence is in its right way, it walks in as direct a line to your good, as when it is in a more pleaſant path of Peace, *Jer.* 24. 5. *Thus ſaith the Lord the God of Iſrael, like thoſe good figs, ſo will I acknowledge them that are carried away captive of Judah, whom I have ſent out of this place into the land of the Chaldeans for their good.* *Iſrael* was ſent to *Babylon* for their good. This improves your faith and patience, *Rev.* 13. 10. Here is the patience and faith of the Saints. So *Rom.* 5 2, 3. *By whom alſo we have acceſs by faith into this grace, wherein we ſtand, and rejoyce in hope of the glory of God; and not only ſo, but we glory in tribulations alſo; knowing that tribulation worketh patience.* By this you are weaned from, and mortified to this World.

2. Doth the Lord in his Providence order many and frequent, cloſe and ſmarting afflictions for you? Why lo, here is the ſame deſign managing

aging as effectually, as if all the peace and prosperity in the World were ordered for you: The face of Providence indeed is not the same, but the love of GOD is still the same, he loves you as much when he smites, as when he smiles on you; for what are his ends in afflicting you, and what the sanctified fruits of your afflictions? Is it not?

1. To purge your iniquities, *Isa.* 27. 9. *By this therefore shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged, and this is all the fruit to take away his sin.*

2. To reduce your hearts to God, *Psal.* 119. 67. Before *I was afflicted I went astray, but now have I kept thy word*

3. To quicken you to your duties let the best man be without afflictions and he will quickly grow dull in the way of his duty.

4 Doth God let loose the chain of Satan to tempt and buffet you? Yet is he still the same God to you as before; for do but observe his ends in that permission, and you will find, that by those things the Lord is leading you towards that desired assurance of his love which your Souls long after. Few Christians attain to any considerable settlement of Soul, but by such shakings and combates; the end of these permissions is to put you to your knees, and blow up a greater flame and fervour of Spirit in prayer, 2 *Cor.* 12. 8. So that eventually these permissions of Providence prove singular advantages, and blessings to you.

SECT.

SECT. III.

WHat remains then, seeing God is unchangeable in his love to his people, pursuing the great ends of all his gracious promises in a steddy course of Providence wherein he will never effect or permit any thing that is really repugnant to his own glory or their good; but that we enter also into this Chamber of rest shut the doors about us, and comfortably improve the unchangeableness of *God*, while we see nothing but changes and troubles here below.

1. Enter into Gods unchangeableness by Faith take up your lodgings in this sweet Attribute also; and to encourage your Faith thereunto, seriously consider a few particulars.

1. Consider how constant, firm, and unchangeable God hath been to his people in all times and streights; not one among many thousands of his people that are passed on before you, but by frequent and certain experience have found him so. What a singular encouragement should this be to our Faith in the case before us? *Ps.* 9 10. *They that know thy name, will put their trust in thee.* So *Is.* 25. 4. *Thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as the storm against the wall.* Neither is there any thing in your experience contradictory to the encouraging reports others have made of God; you must acknowledge, that notwithstanding your own changeableness, who have hardly been able

to

to maintain your hearts in any ſpiritual frame towards God for one day together, yet his mercies towards you have been new every morning and great hath been his Faithfulneſs: You have often turned aſide from the way of your duty, and have not followed God in a ſteddy courſe of obedience, and yet for all that, his goodneſs and mercy have followed you all the days of your life, as it is *Pſal.* 23 6.

2. Conſider how often you have doubted and miſtruſted the unchangeableneſs of God, and been forced with ſhame and ſorrow to retract your folly therein; God hath many times convinc'd you that his love to you is an unchangable love, how many changes ſoever in the courſe of his Providence have paſſed over you; conſult *Iſai.* 49. 14. and *Pſal.* 77. 78. And ſee how the caſes parallel both in reſpect of Gods conſtancy to them and you, and the inconſtancy of his peoples faith then, and yours now; your Fears and Doubts are the ſame with theirs; though his goodneſs and love have been as unchangeable to you, as ever it was towards them.

3. Conſider the Advocatſhip and interceſſion of Jeſus Chriſt in heaven for you; by vertue whereof the favour and love of God becomes unalterable towards his people. If any thing can be ſuppoſed, to cool or quench the love of God towards you, nothing in the world is more like to do it, than your ſin, and this indeed is that, which you fear will eſtrange and alienate the heart of your *God* from you. But Reader, if thou be one that ſincerely mourneſt for all the

grief

grief and dishonour of *God* by thy sin, applye the blood of sprinkling to thy soul by Faith, an makest mortification and watchfulness thy dayl busines; comfort thy self against that Fear, fro that singular encouragement given thee in thi case, 1 *John* 2. 1, 2. *My little Children, thes things write I unto you that ye sin not, and if an man sin, we have an Advocat with the Father Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiati on for our sins.* Look *as the death of Christ heale the great breach betwixt God and thy Soul*, by th reconciliation at first; so the powerful Interc es sion of Christ in heaven effectually prevents al new breaches betwixt *God* and thy Soul after wards, so that he will never totally and finally cast thee off again.

2. Shut the door behind you against all ob jections, scruples, and questionings of *God* im mutability, and by a resolved and steddy Faith, maintain the honour of God in this point by thy constant adherence to it and dependence upon it and especially see that thou give him the glory of his unchangeableness.

1. When thou shalt see the greatest alterati ons and changes made by his providence in the World. What though thou shouldest live to see all things turned upside down, the foundations out of course, all things drawing into a Sea o confusion and trouble? Yet in the midst of thos publick distractions and distress of Nations: En courage thou thy self in this, thy God and his love to his people is the same for ever. *Psal.* 46. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. *God is our refuge and strength, a very*

presen

present help in trouble. Therefore will we not fear, though the earth be moved, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea, God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved.

2. Live by Faith upon Gods unchangeableness under the greatest changes of your own condition in this world: providence may make great alterations upon all your outward comforts, it may cast you down, how dear soever you be to God, from riches into poverty, from health into sickness, from honour into reproach, from liberty into bondage? Thou mayst overlive thy comfortable relations, and of a *Naomi* become a *Marah*; *Thou hast lifted me up, and cast me down*; said as good a man as you, *Psal.* 102. 10. Yet still it is your duty, and will be your great priviledge in the midst of all these changes, to act your Faith upon the never changing *God*, as that holy man did. *Hab.* 3. 17. *Although the Fig-tree shal not blossom, neither fruit be in the vine; the labour of the Olive shall fail, and the fields shal yield no meat; the flocks shall be cut off from the fold, & there shal be no herd in the stalls; yet will I rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation. q. d.* Suppose a thousand disappointments of my earthly hopes, yet will I maintain my hope in God. O Christian, with how many yets, notwithstandings, and nevertheleses, must thy Faith bear in times of trouble, or thou'l sink?

3. See thou live upon Gods unchangeableness when age and sickness shall inform thee, that thy great change is at hand; though thy

heart & thy flesh fail, comfort thy self with this, thy God will never fail thee, *Psal.* 73. 16. O God, saith *David*, thou hast taught me from my youth and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works, now also when I am old and gray-headed, forsake me not. *Psal.* 17. 17. 18.

4. Live upon the unchangeableness of God under the greatest and saddest changes of your *spiritual condition*, God may cloud the light of his countenance over thy Soul, he may fill thee with fears and troubles, and the comforter that should relieve thee, may seem to be far off; yet still maintain thy Faith in the unchangeableness of his loves; trust in the name of the Lord, stay thy self upon thy God when thou walkest in darkness and hast no light, *Isai.* 50. 10. Thus shut thy door.

3. Improve the unchangeableness of God to thy best advantage in the worst times, by drawing thence such comfortable conclusions as these:

1. If God be an unchangeable God in his promises, and in his love to his people, what should hinder but the people of God may live happily and comfortably in the saddest times, and greatest troubles upon earth. *As sorrowful, yet always rejoycing as poor, yet making many rich, as having nothing, and yet possessing all things*: 2 *Cor.* 6. 10. Certainly nothing ought to quench a Christians mirth that is not able to separate him from the love of Christ. *Rom.* 8. 35.

2. If God be an unchangeable God in his love to his people: then it becomes all that have special interest in this God, to be unchangeable

and immoveable in the ways of their obedience towards him: God will not cast you off, see that you cast not off your duties, no not when they are surrounded with difficulties: he loves you, though you often grieve him by sin: see that you still love him, though he often grieve and burden you by affliction: he will own you for his people under the greatest contempts and reproaches of the world: see that you own and honour his ways, and truths when you are under most reproach from a vile world.

CHAP. X.

Opening the Care of God for his people in times of trouble, as the fifth Chamber of Rest to Believers.

SECT. I.

CAre in the general Notion of it, as it is applyed to the Creature, imports the studiousness, and solicitousness of our thoughts, for the safety and welfare of our selves, or those we love, and highly value. Now though there be no such thing properly in God, at whose dispose and pleasure all events are, and to whose counsels and appointments all difficulties must give way, yet he is pleased to accommodat himself to our weakness, and expresses his regard and love to his people, by such things, as one creature doth to another to which it is endeared by relation or affection. To this purpose we find many significant, Synonomus expressions in

Scripture, all importing the care of God over his people in a pleaſant variety of notion and expreſſion, as *Nah.* 1. 7 *The Lord is good, a ſtrong hold in the day of trouble, and he knoweth them that truſt in him.* He knoweth them, *i. e.* he hath a ſpecial, tender, and careful eye upon them, to ſee their wants ſupplied, and to protect them in all their dangers; for in the common and general ſenſe, he knoweth them that truſt not in him, as well as thoſe that do; and further to clear this ſenſe of the place, it is ſaid, *Pſal.* 40. 17. *The Lord thinketh on them,* importing not only ſimple cogitation, but the immoration or abiding of his thoughts upon them, as our thoughts are wont to do, upon that which we highly eſteem, eſpecially when any danger is near it. And yet farther to clear this ſenſe, it is ſaid. *Job* 36 7 *He withdraweth not his eye from the righteous.* As when *Moſes* was expoſed in the Ark of Bulrushes, where his life was in eminent hazards by the waters of *Nilus* upon one ſide, and the *Egyptian cutthroats* on the other: his ſiſter *Miriam* kept watch at a diſtance, to ſee what would be done to him. Her eye was never off that Ark wherein her dear Brother lay: fear and care engaged her eye to keep a true watch for him. Thus the Lord withdraweth not his eye from the righteous. To the ſame purpoſe is that expreſſion, *Deut.* 33. 3. *Yea, he loved the people: all his Saints are in thy hand.* That which we dearly love and prize above ordinary, we keep in our own hands for its ſecurity, as not thinking it ſafe enough in any other hand or place. And

once more, *Iſaiah* 49.16. God is ſaid to engrave them upon the palms of his Hands, alluding to what is cuſtomary among men, who when they would charge their memory with ſomething of ſpecial concernment, uſe to change a Ring, or bind a Threed about the Finger, to put them in mind of it. Thus is the care of our God expreſſed to us in the Scripture notions. The amount of all which is given us in that one proper and full expreſſion of the Apoſtle, 1 *Pet.* 5 7. *He careth for you.* To open this Chamber of *Divine care* as a place of ſweeteſt reſt, to our anxious and perplexed minds, in times of difficulty and hazard, it will be neceſſary that you ſeriouſly ponder;

1. The Grounds and Reaſons
2. The Extent and Compaſs of the care of
3. The Lovely Properties God.

1. The grounds and reaſons of Gods care for his people; which are,

1. The ſtrict and dear relations in which he is pleaſed to own them. Believers are his children, and you know how naturally children engage & draw forth the Fathers care for them. This is the argument that Chriſt uſes, *Mat* 9 31. 32. *Therefore take no thought, ſaying, what ſhall we eat? or what ſhall we drink? or wherewithal ſhall we be cloathed? for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all theſe things.* Children, eſpecially when young, diſquiet not themſelves about proviſions for back and belly, but leave that to the care of their Parents, from whom by the ty and bonds of nature and love,

they expect provision for all those wants: Every one takes care for his own; much more doth God for his own Children, and indeed he expects his children should live upon his care; as our children in their minority, do upon ours.

2. Gods precious estimation and value of them engages his constant care for them. Believers are his Jewels, *Mal.* 3.17. His peculiar people, 1 *Pet* 2.6. His special portion or treasure in this world, *Deut.* 32.9. And as such he prizes and esteems them above all the people of the earth, and accordingly exerciseth his special care in all the dangers they are here exposed to. Special love engageth peculiar care.

3. The dangers and fears of the people of God in this world, are many and great, and were it not for the Lords assiduous and tender care over them, they must necessarly be ruined, both in soul and body, by them. The Church is Gods Vineyard, 'its enemies as so many wild Boars to root it up; Upon this account, he saith, *Isai.* 27. 3. *I the Lord do keep it, lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day.* And indeed it is well for *Israel* that he that keepeth it, never slumbereth nor sleepeth, *Psal.* 121 4. That our houses are in peace, that we and our dear relations fell not as a prey, into cruel and bloody hands, skilful to destroy, that we find any rest or comfort in so evil and dangerous a world, it is wholly and only to be ascribed to the care of God over us, and ours.

4. Jesus Christ hath solemnly recommended all the people of God, to his particular care. It was

was one of the laſt expreſſions of Chriſts love to them at the parting hour, *Joh.* 17 11. *And now I am no more in the world, but theſe are in the world, and I come to thee: Holy Father, keep through thine own name thoſe whom thou haſt given me. q. d.* While I have been perſonally preſent with them, I took the ſame care of them; as a Shepherd doth of his Flock, or a tender Father of his Children: but now I muſt leave them in the world, and in the midſt of a world of dangers, fears and troubles, againſt which they can make no proviſion or defence themſelves. Father remember them, look after them, when I ſhall be removed from them, they are thine, as well as mine; and I recommend them with my laſt breath to thy care and protection. This is a ſpecial ground alſo of Gods care for them.

5. Believers dayly caſt themſelves upon the care of God, and reſign themſelves unto it in their dayly Prayers. And by their often renewed acts of Faith, than which no act is found more engaging from the creature upon its *God*; though there be nothing of merit, yet there is much of engaging efficacy in it, *Iſaiah* 26. 3. *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whoſe mind is ſtayed on thee: becauſe he truſteth in thee.* We find it ſo among our ſelves, the more firmly and entirely any one truſted to us, and dependeth upon us, the more he engageth us to protect or relieve him. Now this is the dayly work of Chriſtians to truſt God over all, and put all their concernments into his hand, which very truſt and dependence draws forth the care of God for them.

6. In a word, the many promiſes God hath made to his people to preſerve, ſupport and ſupply them in all the times of need, engageth the care of God for them, as often as ſuch wants, or dangers befal them: for indeed herein, he at once takes care for their neceſſity, and for his own honour and glory. They truſt to his word, and they rely upon his promiſes which therefore he will be careful to make good. Thus was the argument which the Church pleaded in the time of eminent danger, to engage the care of God for them, *Pſal.* 74. 20. *Have reſpect unto the Covenant: for the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty*, *q. d.* O Lord thy people are in the midſt of cruel enemies, take care for their protection, and though there be no worth in them, to which thou ſhouldeſt have reſpect, yet have reſpect unto thine own Covenant: let the glory of thy Name draw forth thy care to thy People.

SECT. II.

WE have ſeen the grounds and reaſons of Gods care over his people, let us next view the extent and compaſs of this Divine care; and here me thinks the Lord ſaith to his people as he ſaid to *Abraham*, *Gen.* 13. 14, 15. *Lift up now thine eyes from the place where thou art, northward, and ſouthward, and eaſtward, and weſtward, for all the land which thou ſeeſt, to thee will I give it and to thy ſeed for ever.* So here poor timerous, dejected Believer, lift up thine eyes from the place where thou art, and take a view

of

of all the promiſes in the Scriptures of truth: promiſes of ſupport under all burthens, ſupplies of all wants, deliverances out of all dangers, aſſiſtances in all diſtreſſes; to thee have I given them all as a portion for ever. This care of God walks the round, and encompaſſeth the Souls and Bodies of them that fear him day and night. There is no intereſt or concern of either found without the line of his all ſurrounding care, and every one of his children are enfolded in his Fatherly arms, *Deut.* 33. 3. *All his Saints are in thy hand.* All and every one of their wants and ſtreights are obſerved by this care, in order to their ſupply, *Phil.* 4. 29. *My God ſhall ſupply all your wants.*

1. Great is the care of God over the Bodies of his people, and all the dangers and neceſſities of them as they dayly grow; your meat and drink are daily provided for you by your Fathers care, *Pſal.* 111. 5 *He hath given meat unto them that fear him; he will ever be mindful of his Covenant.* It is from this care of thy heavenly Father, that neceſſary proviſions have been made for thee, of which it may be thou haſt had no foreſight. This is the God that hath fed thee all thy life long, *Gen.* 48. 15. It is from the ſame care thy body hath been cloathed *Mat.* 6. 28. *How much more ſhall he cloath you. O ye of little Faith?* It is through this care, you ſleep in peace, and your reſt is made ſweet unto you, *Prov* 3 24. *When thou lyeſt down thou ſhalt not be afraid; yea, thou ſhalt lie down, and thy ſleep ſhall be ſweet.* In a word, thou oweſt all thy recoveries from

dangerous diſeaſes, and narrow eſcapes from the grave, to this care of thy God over thee, *He is the Lord that healeth thee Exod.* 15. 26. That the incenſed humours of thy body had not overflowed their banks, like an inundation of the Sea, when they raged in thy dangerous diſeaſes, is only becauſe thy God took the care of thee, and ſet them their bounds.

2. Divine care extends it ſelf to the ſouls of all that fear God, and to all the concernments of their Souls; and manifeſtly diſcovers it ſelf in all the gracious proviſions it hath made for them. More particularly, it is from the tender Fatherly care that,

1. A Saviour was provided to redeem them, when they were ruined and loſt by ſin, *Joh.* 3. 16. *Rom.* 8. 32.

2. That ſpiritual cordials are provided to refreſh them in all their ſinking ſorrows, and inward diſtreſſes. *Pſal.* 94. 19.

3. That a door of deliverance is opened to them, when they are ſorely preſſed upon by temptations, and ready to be overwhelmed, 1 *Cor.* 10. 13.

4. That a ſtrength above their own comes in ſeaſonably to ſupport them, when they are almoſt over-weighed with inward troubles, when great weights are upon them, the everlaſting arms are underneath them, *Pſal.* 138. 3. *Iſai.* 57. 16.

5. That their ruine is prevented when they are upon the dangerous and ſlippery brink of temptations, and their feet almoſt gone, *Pſal.* 73. 12. *Hoſ.* 2. 6. 2 *Cor.* 12. 7.

6. That

6. That they are recovered again after dangerous falls by sin, and not left as a prey and trophy to their enemy, *Hos.* 14. 4.

7. That they are guided and directed in the right way, when they are at a loss, and know not what course to take, *Psal.* 16 11. *Psal.* 73. 24.

8. That they are established and confirmed in Christ in the most shaking and overturning times of trouble and persecution: so that neither their heart turneth back, nor their steps decline from his ways, *Jer.* 32. 40. *John* 4. 14.

9 That they are upheld under spiritual desertions, and recovered again out of that dismal darkness in the chearful light of Gods countenance, *Isai.* 57. 16.

10. That they are at last brought safe to Heaven through the innumerable hazards and dangers all along their way thither, *Heb.* 11. 16. In all these things the care of their God eminently discovers it self for their Souls.

3. Once more let us consider the care of God for his people in the lovely properties thereof. As 1. It is a fatherly care, than which none is more great or tender, *Mat.* 9 8. *Your Father knoweth that you have need of all these things.* And indeed the greatest and tendrest care of an earthly Father is but a faint shadow of that tender care which is in the heart of God over his Children; for to that end we find them compared, *Matth.* 7. 11. *If ye then, being evil know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven, give good things to them which ask him?* The care of

Parents.

Parents is carelesnesse it self, compared with that care which GOD takes of his.

2. The care of God is an universal care watching over all his people in all ages, places and dangers, 2 *Chron.* 16 9 *The eyes of the Lord run to and fro through the whole earth, to shew himself strong in behalf of them whose heart is perfect towards him.* This was applyed by way of reproof to *Asia*, who out of a sinful distrust of the care of God, relyed upon the help of *Syria*, as if there had not been a God in Heaven to take care of him and the people.

3. Gods care over his, is assiduous and continual; *his mercies are new every morning, great is his faithfulness, Lam* 3. 22, 23. *He kept his people night and day, Isai.* 27.3. Could Satan, or his instruments find such an hour wherein the seven eyes of Providence should be all asleep, that would be the fatal hour to our souls and bodies; but he that keepeth *Israel* slumbereth not.

4. Gods care over his, is exceeding tender, far beyond the tenderness that the most affectionate Mother ever felt in her heart towards the child that hanged on her breast, *Isai.* 49.15. *Can a mother forget her sucking child,* &c. *they may, yet will not I forget thee.* The birds of the air are not so tender of their young in the nest, as God is of his people in the world, *Isai.* 31. 5. Mercy fills the heart of *GOD*, yea, tender mercy, yea, multitudes of tender mercies, *Psalm* 51. 1.

5. The care of God is a seasonable care, which is always sure to nick the opportunity and proper

proper ſeaſon of relieving his people, in the mount of the Lord it ſhall be ſeen: The beauty of Providence is much ſeen in this thing, where ever you feel a want, this care finds a ſupply; and thus much briefly of the care of God abſolutely conſiered in it ſelf.

SECT. III.

IT remains that we alſo conſider the care of God in its twofold reſpect, *viz.*

1. To his Promiſes. 2. To his Providences.

1. There are multitudes of promiſes found in the Scriptures, exactly fitted as ſo many keys to open the door of this comfortable Chamber to receive, and ſecure all them that fear God, whatever heir wants, fears, or diſtreſſes are. Theſe are reducible into two Claſſes, or ranks. *viz.*

1. More general and comprehenſive. 2. More particular Promiſes.

The general and more comprehenſive Promiſes are found in the general expreſſures of the Covenant, as that to *Abraham. Gen* 17. 1. *I am God Almighty, walk thou before me and be perfect. q. d.* Let it be thy care to walk exactly in the paths of obedience before me, and I will take care to ſupply all thy wants from the never failing fountain of my al-ſufficiency; and of the ſame tenour is that, 2 *Cor.* 6. 18. I will be to them a Father, and they ſhall be my ſons and daughters. *i. e.* Expect your proviſions and proteſtations from my care, as children do from their father. More particularly, there are ſix ſorts of promiſes, wherein the care of God is particularly made

made over to his people in the greatest hazards and difficulties in this life, *viz.*

1. It is assigned and made over to them to supply all their needs, so far as the glory of God and advancement of their Spiritual and eternal good shall require it, *Psal.* 34. 9. *They that fear the Lord shall not want any good thing.* All your livelihood is in that promise; thence comes your daily bread; your own and your families meat is in that Cupboard.

2. It is made over to the Church and people of God for their defence against all dangers, *Isa.* 54. 17. *No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper*, This promise wards off all the deadly blows, and puts by all the mortal thrusts that are made at you; here the care of God forms it self into a shield for your defence.

3. The care of God is engaged by promise for the moderation and mitigation of your affections, that they may not exceed your abilities to bear them, *Isai.* 27. 8. 9. *In measure when it shooteth forth, thou wilt debate with it; he stayeth the rough wind in the day of the east-wind.* If the wind blow from a cold corner, this promise moderates it, that it blow not a storm; all the sparing mercies and sweetning circumstances, which gracious Souls thankfully note in the sharpest tryals come from this Promises, wherein the care of God is ingaged for that purpose.

4. Divine care is put under the bond of a promise, for the direction and guidance of all their troubles and tryals to an happy issue, *Rom.* 8. 28. *All things shall work together for good.* From what

what quarter soever the wind bloweth, God will take care that it shall be useful to drive you to your Port; the very Providences that cast you down by vertue of this promise prove as serviceable and beneficial as those that lift you up.

5. The care of God stands engaged in the promise for the help and aid of his people in all the extremities and exigencies of their lives. *Psa.* 46. 1. *God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.* Never is the care of God more visible and conspicuous, than in such times of need.

6. Lastly, the care of God is engaged to carry his people safe through all the dangers of the way, and brings them all home to glory at last, *John* 10. 28. *I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.* This care of God thus engaged for you is your convoy to accompany and secure you till it see you safe into your harbour of eternal rest.

2. You have heard how the care of God is engaged for you by promise; now see how it actuates, and exerts it self for the people of *God* in the various methods of providence: and here oh here is the sweetest pleasure of the Christians life, a delight far transcending all the delights of this life. Sit down Christian in this Chamber also, and make but such observations upon the care of thy God as follow, and then tell me whether the world with all its pleasures and delights, can give the such another entertainment?

1. Reflect upon the constant, sweet, and suitable-

able provisions that from time to time have been prepared for thee and thine, by this care of thy God; From whence soever thy wants did come, I am sure from hence came thy supplies, it hath enabled thee to return the same answer the disciples did to that question, *Luke* 22. 35. *Lacked ye any thing, and they said nothing.*

2. *Reflect with admiration upon the various difficulties of your lives, wherein your thoughts have been entangled, and out of which you have been extricated and delivered by the care of God over you: How oft have your thought been like a revelled skern of silk, so entangled and perplexed with the difficulties and fears before you, that you could find no end but the longer you thought, the more you were puzled, till you have left thinking; and fell to praying; and there you have found the right end to wind up all your thoughts upon the bottom of peace and sweet contentment, according to that direction,* Psal. 37. 5. *Commit thy way unto the Lord, trust also in him, and he shall bring it to passe.*

3. Observe with a melting heart how the care of thy *God*, hath disposed and directed thy way to unforseen advantages; had he not ordered thy steps when, and as he did, thou hast not been in possession of those Temporal and spiritual mercies that sweeten thy life at this day. Surely the steps of good men are ordered by the Lord: and as for the Christian, what reason hast thou with an heart overflowing with love and thankfulness to look up and say, *My Father, thou art the guide of my youth?* It is sweet to live by Faith upon

upon Divine care. Oh what a Serene life might we live, careful for nothing, but making known our requeſt unto God in every thing, *Phil.* 4. 6. caſting all our care on him that careth for us, 1 *Pet* 5. 7. Perplexing our thoughts about nothing but rolling every burthen upon godly Faith. Thus lived holy *Muſculus* when reduced to extreme poverty, and danger at the ſame time; then it was that he ſolaced his Soul with that comfortable *Diſtich*, a good leſſon for others.

Eſt Deus in cœlis, qui providus omnia curat,
Credentes nuſquam deſeruiſſe pteſt.

The provident care of his heavenly Father, made his heart as quiet as the child at the breaſt, Chriſtian, thou knoweſt not what diſtreſsful days are coming upon the earth, or what perſonal tryals ſhall befal thee in this world; but I adviſe thee as thou valueſt the tranquillity and comfort of thy life: Shut up thy ſelf by Faith in this Chamber of Divine Care, it is thy beſt ſecurity in this world: Reflect frequently & thankfully upon the manifold ſupports, ſupplies, and ſalvations thou haſt already had from this fountain of mercies, and be not diſcouraged at new difficulties. When an eminent Chriſtian was told of ſome that way-laid him to deſtroy him; his anſwer was, *Si Deus mei curam non habet, quid vivo?* In like manner thou mayeſt ſay, if God had not taken care for thee, how couldeſt thou have lived till now? How couldeſt thou have overlived ſo many troubles, fears, and dangers as thou haſt done?

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

Opening the ſixth and laſt Chamber, viz. The love of God, as a reſting place to believing Souls in evil times.

SECT. I.

THough all the attributes in the name of Chambers of this houſe of God are glorious, and excellent, yet this of love is tranſcendently glorious: Of this room it may be ſaid as it was of *Solomons* royal Chariot, *Cant.* 3. 10. *The midſt thereof is paved with love.* In this Attribute the glory of God is ſignally and eminently manifeſted, 1 *John* 4. 9. 10. And upon this foundation the hopes and comforts of all Believers are built and founded, *Rom* 8 35. *Who ſhall ſeparate us from the love of Chriſt? Shall tribulation or diſtreſs, or perſecution, or famine, or nakedneſs, or peril, or ſword?* He defies and deſpiſeth them all, becauſe neither of them alone, nor altogether by their united ſtrength, can unclaſp the arms of Divine Love, in which believers are ſafely enfolded. In this Attribute of Gods people by Faith entrench themſelves, and of it a Believer ſaith, *Hic murus aheneus eſto*, this ſhall be my ſtrong hold and fortreſs in the day of trouble, and well may we ſo eſteem and reckon it, if we conſider,

1 That wherever the ſpecial love of God goes, there the ſpecial preſence of God goes alſo, *Joh.* 14. 23. *He ſhall be loved of my Father, and we will*

will come unto him, and make our abode with him. And O how ſecure and ſafe muſt thoſe be (however times govern) with whom God himſelf maketh his abode! For as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks *Pſal.* 91. 1. *He that dwells in the ſecret place of the moſt high, ſhall abide under the ſhadow of the Almighty.* And he that is overſhadowed by an Almighty power, needs not fear how many mighty enemies combine againſt him.

2. Whereever the ſpecial love of God is placed, that perſon becomes precious & highly valuable in the eyes of God; he appretiates and eſtimates ſuch a man as his peculiar treaſure, which naturally and neceſſarily draws and ſpreads the wing of Divine care over him for his protection *Deut.* 33 12. *The beloved of the Lord ſhall dwell in ſafety by him, and the Lord ſhall cover him all the day long.* Things of greateſt value are always kept in ſafeſt cuſtody.

3. Upon whoſoever the ſpecial love of God is ſet, there all events and iſſues of troubles are ſure to be overruled to the eternal advantage of that ſoul, *Rom* 8. 28. Which conſideration alone is ſufficient to unſting all the troubles in the world, and make the beloved of the Lord ſhout and triumph in the midſt of Tribulations.

But let us enter yet further into this glorious Chamber of Divine love, and more particularly view the admirable properties thereof; though when all is done, it will be found a love paſſing knowledge; our thoughts may admire, but can never meaſure it.

1. And firſt you will find it an ancient love, whoſe

whose spring is in eternity it self. Believer, God is thine ancient friend, who forsaw and loved thee, before thou, yea, before this world was in beeing, the fruits and effects thereof thou gatherest in time, but the root that produces them was before all times, *Prov* 8 22, 23. *The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.* Thus was the love of God contriving, and providing the best of mercies in Christ for us; while as yet there were no such creatures in the world, nor a world prepared to receive us.

2. The love of God to his people is a free, and altogether undeserved love; it must needs be so seeing it prevented our very beeing, which had it not done, yet no motives had been found in us, to allure it to us more than others, *Deut. 7. 7. The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor chuse you, because ye were more in number than any people, (for ye were the fewest of all people) but because the Lord loved you.* So that we cannot find one stone of our own merit in the foundation of this love: for those whom it embraceth in its arms are. *Immerentes, & malè merentes,* ill deserving as well as undeserving, we were loved of God, before we were lovly in our selves; it is freely pitched upon us, not purchased by us, *Is.* 43. 24.

3. The love of God to Believers is a bountiful love, streaming forth continually mercies both innumerable and invaluable to their souls and bodies, 2 *Pet.* 1. 2. Christian, it would quick-

ly

quickly weary thine arm, yea, let me say the arm of an Angel; but to write down the thousandth part of the mercies which have already flowed out of this precious fountain to thee; though all thou hast received, or shalt receive in this world, are but the beginnings of mercy, and first fruits of the love of God to thee; 'tis the love of God which daily loads thee with benefits, as the expression is, *Psal.* 68 19. And if thou art daily loaded with mercies, what an heap of mercies will the mercies of thy whole life be.

4 The love of God to believers is a distinguishing love, not the proportion of all, no, nor yet of many besides thee, 1 *Cor.* 1.26. The generality of the world dwell in the Room of common providence, not in the Chamber of special love, into which God hath admitted thee; this consideration should make thee break out in admiration, as it is, *John* 14. 22. Lord, how is it that thou wilt *manifest thy self to me, and not to the world.*

5. The love of God to believers, is a love transcendent to all creature love, it moves in an higher Sphere than the love of any creature doth, *Rom.* 5 6,7,8. We read of *Jacobs* love to *Rachel*, which is so celebrated in the Sacred Story for the fervour of it, and yet all that it enabled him to suffer was but the summers heat and the Winters cold; a trifle to what the love of Christ engaged, and enabled him to suffer for thy sake. We read also of the love of *David* to *Absalom* which made him wish, would God I had died for thee, O *Absalom*, my son, my son. This love was

only

only manifeſted in a wiſh, which happily might have been retracted too, hard there been an exchange, to be made indeed; but the life of Chriſt; worth millions of his life, was actually and willingly ſtaked down for thy ſoul. We read of the love of one Diſciple manifeſted to another Diſciple in a cup of cold water; but Chriſt hath manifeſted his love to thee in pouring out his warmeſt heart blood for thy redemption. Oh what a tranſcendent love is the Divine love!

6. To conclude, (though alas, little is ſaid of the love of GOD) it is an everlaſting and unchangeable love. Hills and Mountains ſhall ſooner ſtart from their *Baſes*, than his loving kindneſs depart from his people, *Iſa.* 54 10. Though he afflict us, ſtill he loves us, *Pſal.* 89. 32, 33. Nay though we grieve him, yet ſtill he loves us, *Mark* 16. 7. *Tell the Diſciples, and tell Peter. Peter* had grived Chriſt, denied Chriſt, yet will he not renounce nor caſt off *Peter.*

SECT. II.

WEll then, if God have opened to your ſouls ſuch a Chamber of love, where your ſouls may be ravished with daily delights, as well as ſecured from danger and ruine: O that you would enter into it by Faith, and dwell for ever in the love of God! I mean, clear up your intereſt in it, and then ſolace your Souls in the delights of it. Need I to uſe an Argument, or ſpend one Motive to preſs you to enter into ſuch an Heaven upon Earth? If the deadneſs of thy heart doth need it, take into conſideration, Reader, theſe few that follow; 1. *Mo-*

1. *Motive.* Ponder with thy self how sad and miserable thy case will be with thee in the days of calamity and distress, if the love of God shall then be clouded to thy Soul; in those days such as love thee will either be absent from thee, or impotent to help thee, all thy friends and familiars may be removed far off, and whither then wilt thou turn should God be far off too? This was that evil which *Jeremiah* so vehemently deprecated, *Chap.* 17. *v.* 17. *Be not a terrour unto me, thou art my hope, in the day of evil* q. d. O Lord my Soul depends upon refreshment, and comfort from thee, when all the springs of earthly comforts are dried up, Shouldst thou be a terrour to me in the day of evil, it will be the most terrible disappointment that ever befel my Soul, if thou be kind, I care not who be cruel if I have the love of God, I value not the hatred of men; but if GOD be a terrour, who or what can be a comforter? The love of GOD is the alone refuge to which the gracious Soul retreats upon all creature disappointments, and failings. This therefore is the main thing to be feared against the evil day.

2. *Mot.* The knowledge and assurance of the love of GOD is a mercy attainable by a gracious Soul, notwithstanding the imperfections of Grace. *Peter* had his falls and failings as well as other Christians, yet when Christ puts the question home to him, *John* 21 15. *Simon son of Jonas loveſt thou me more than theſe?* he was able to return a clear positive answer; *Yea, Lord thou knoweſt that I love thee.* Study thy heart Christian,

ſtian, and ſtudy the Scriptures; if thou canſt find the ſincere love of GOD in thy heart, that Scripture will clear the love of GOD to thy Soul, 1 *John* 4. 19. *We love him becauſe he firſt loved us.* If thou lay thine hand upon a ſtone-wall, and feel it warm, thou mayeſt conclude the Sun beams have ſhone upon it; for warmth is not naturally in dead ſtones. Our love to GOD is but the reflex beam of his love to us, and we know there can be no reflex without a direct beam. Thouſands of Chriſtians do at this day actually poſſeſs the raviſhing ſenſe of Divine love, whoſe fears and complaints have been the ſame that thine now are; that GOD who indulged this favour to them, can do as much for thee.

3. *Mot.* Think how well thou wilt be provided for the worſt and difficulteſt times, when the love of GOD ſhall be well ſecured to thy Soul when the love of GOD, *i.e.* the ſenſe of his love is once ſhed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghoſt, which for that end, among others, is given unto us, we ſhall then be able to glory in tribulation, *Rom.* 5 3. 5. We may then bid defiance to all the adverſe powers of hell, and earth, and ſay now do your worſt: *we are out of your reach, and above all your terrours and affrights. Be adviſed then to ſit cloſe to this work: clear but this point once, and the worſt is paſt. O lye at the feet of God night and day, give him no reſt, take no denial from him, fill thy mouth with lies and argu-ments, tell him, Lord it is neither for corn nor wine that I ſeek thee, but only for thy love; beſtow the other gifts upon whom thou wilt, only ſeal up thy lo*

love to my Soul.

And lastly, *I advise thee*, Reader, *to be exceeding careful, when God admits thee into the sense of his love, to shut the door behind thee, lest thy soul be soon expelled thence, by the subtility of satan, who envies nothing more, than such an happiness as this: that envious spirit totally despairs of the least drop of such a mercy, and therefore swells with envy at thine enjoyment of it; but if ever thou fasten thy hand of faith upon his mercy, loose not thy hold by every objection with which he will rap thy fingers.*

1. If he object the many *sharp afflictions, and manifold rods of God upon thee, call not the love of God in question for that; but remember what he saith*, Heb. 12. 6. *Whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.* Fatherly corrections are, so far from being inconsistent *with the love of God, that his love is rather questionable without them, than for them; they are love tokens, not marks of hatred.*

2. Yield not up thy claim and title to the love of God, because he sometimes hides away his face from thee; thou knowest the sun is up, and going on in its regular course, in the darkest and cloudiest day. *My God, My God*, saith Christ himself; *Why hast thou forsaken me?* believe he is still thy God, and his love immutable, when the sense and manifestations thereof do fail.

3. Call not the Love of God into question, because of thy great vileness and unworthiness; why not when thou most loathest thyself, GOD must needs loath thee too: he can love where thou loathest. *Return, return*, O Shulamite,

return, return, that we may look upon thee: what will ye see in the Shulamite? *as it were the company of two armies.* The Spouse was exceeding beautiful in the eyes of others, when most base and vile in her own: What would you see in the *Shulamite?* alas, there is nothing in me, at the best, but Conflicts, and Wars, betwixt Grace and Corruption, as it were betwixt two armies, *Cant.* 6. 13.

3. Quit not thy claim to the Love of God because he seems to shut out thy prayers, and delays to answer the long continued desires and importunities of thy soul in some cases. *David* would neither censure his God, no nor call in question his interest in him, because of such a delay and silence, *Psal.* 22. 1, 2. *My God, my God,* The claim is doubled, *vers.* 1. and yet in the next breath he saith, *I cry in the day time, but thou heareſt not, and in the night season, and am not silent.*

Thus I have offered you some advice and assistance, how to secure your selves in these Divine Attributes, *viz.* The Power, Wisdom, Faithfulness, Unchangeableness, care, and Love of GOD, as in so many sanctuaries, and comfortable Refuges in the dayes of common Calamities. It is noted even of the *Egyptians*, when the storm of Hail was coming upon the land, *Exod.* 9. 20. *He that feared the word of the Lord among the servants of* Pharoah, *made his servants and his cattel flee into the houses.* Let not an *Egyptian* take more care of his beasts, than Christians of their Souls. Stormy days are coming, GOD, hath

hath provided you a refuge, and given you seasonable premonitions, and calls from Heaven, to hasten into them, before Desolations come. The Lord help us to hear his Calls, and comply with them, which will be as much our Priviledge, as it is our Duty. And so much of the *fifth Proposition*, viz. That GODS Attributes, Promises, and Providences, are prepared for the security of his people in the greatest distresses that befal them in the World.

PROPOSITION. VI.

That none but GODS own people are taken into these Chambers of Security, or can expect his special protection in evil times.

SECT. I.

THis *Proposition* describes and clears the qualified subject of this Priviledge. GODS own people, & none but such can warrantably claim special protection in evil times, and this is consonant to the current account of Scripture, *Isa.* 3. 10. 11. *Say ye unto the righteous, it shall be well with him, Wo to the wicked, it shall be ill with him.* He speaks concerning the day of *Jerusalem's* ruin, and *Judah's* fall as appears *ver* 8. So great a difference will God make even in this world, betwixt the righteous, and the wicked. In *Nah.* 1, you have also a terrible day described, wherein *Bashan*, *Carmel*, and *Lebanon*, the most pleasant & fruitful places of the land shall languish, *vers.* 4. The mountains shall quake, the hills

melt, the earth, and thoſe that dwell therein burnt up, *verſ* 5. The indignation and fury of God poured out like fire, *ver.* 6. The priviledged people in this terrible day are God's own people, they only are taken into ſecurity, *ver.* 7. The Lord is good, a ſtrong hold in the day of trouble, and he knoweth them that truſt in him, *i. e.* he ſo knoweth them as to care and provide for them in that evil day, and ſo throughout the whole Scripture, you ſhall find the Promiſes of protection ſtill made to the people of God. When the *Chaldean* Army, like a devouring fire was ready to ſeize upon the *land*, the ſinners in *Sion* were afraid; fearfulneſs ſurprized the hypocrites, for who among us (ſay they) ſhall dwell with devouring fire, and everlaſting burning? Yes, ſaith GOD, ſome there are that ſhall abide that day, *viz. He that walketh righteouſly, and ſpeaketh uprightly; he ſhall dwell on high, his place of defence ſhall be the munition of rocks. i. e.* God will be a ſanctuary to them, when others ſhall be as ſtubble before the flames, *Iſa.* 33. 14. 15, 16.

But for the right ſtating of this Propoſition, three things muſt be heedfully adverted.

1. That all good men are not always exempted from the ſtroke of outward Calamities; in that ſenſe the righteous may periſh, and merciful men be taken away, yea, they may periſh, in love, and be taken away in mercy from the evil to come, *Iſa.* 57. 1, 2. *Mica.* 7 1, 2.

2. That all wicked men are not always expoſed to external miſeries, but a *juſt man may perish in his righteouſneſs, and a wicked man prolong*

prolong his life in his wickedness, Eccl. 7. 15.

3. But in this sense, we are to understand the Proposition, that none, but the people of God, have right, by promise, to his special protections in evil days, and that all such shall either be preserved from the stroke of calamities, or from the deadly sting, namely Eternal Ruin, by them; though they should fall by the hands of enemies, yet they die, as *Josiah* did in peace, 2 *Kings* 22. 19, 20. If they be taken away, it is but out of the way of greater mischiefs; death doth but lay the Saints in their beds of rest, when it hurries away others into everlasting miseries: if they be not excused from troubles, yet their troubles are to be sanctified to their eternal good, *Rom* 8. 28. And the Lord will be with them in their troubles, *Ps* 91. 15. *Isa*. 41. 10.

Two things remain to be considered, before we finish this last Proposition: *viz.*

1. Who the people of God are?

2. Why this Priviledge is peculiar to them?

1. Who are the people of God? The Scripture describes them two ways; Negatively, and Positively; Negatively, in opposition to those who are not the people of God, but are (1.) the servants of sin, obeying it in the lust of it, which the people of God neither are, nor dare to do, *Rom*. 6. 11, 12. *&c.* (2) The men of this world, who have their portion in this life, savouring, & minding the things of the world only, whereas the people of God are called out of the world, *John* 17. 16. and principally study, and labour after the higher concernments of the world to

come, *Rom.* 8. 5. (3) The vaſſals of Satan doing his luſt, and in ſubjection to his power, *Acts* 26.18. *Epheſ.* 2 2. from which bondage the people of GOD are made free. (4) Nor yet are they their own, living wholly to themſelves, and ſeeking only their own ends as others do, 1 *Cor.* 6. 19, 20. Theſe, all theſe are not the people of God. God will not own them for ſuch; they but deceive themſelves in thinking; and calling themſelves ſo: but then poſitively. They are (1) a people regenerated, and born again, *Joh.* 1. 13. Theſe regenerations gives them both the Eſſence and denomination of the people of God: it is as impoſſible to be the children of God, without regeneration, as it is to be the children of men without generation. (2) They are a people in covenant with God, *Ezek.* 16. 8. *I entered into a Covenant with thee, and thou becameſt mine.* For in this Covenant they give themſelves to the Lord. 2 *Cor.* 8. 5. They avouch the Lord to be their God, and make over themſelves to him to be his people, *Jer.* 31. 33. devoting unto God all that they are, their ſouls, and bodies, with every faculty and member incluſively, *Rom.* 12. 1. *Luke* 10. 27. All that they have, *Rom.* 11. 36. all is dedicated, and devoted to the Lords uſe and ſervice, and theſe only are the people of God.

2. The laſt thing to be cleared is, Why the people of God, and none beſide them; have this peculiar priviledge of an hiding place in the day of trouble; and the grounds of it are:

1. Becauſe they only have ſpecial intereſt in God, and propriety is the ground on which they claim

claim and expect protection, I am thine, save me, *Psal.* 119 94. Upon this very ground it was, that *David* encouraged himself in one of his greatest plunges, and distresses of his whole life, 1 *Sam.* 30. 6. *But* David *encouraged himself in the Lord his God.*

2. The people of God only are at peace with God; and where there is no peace, there can be no protection: the Harbours and Garrisons of one Kingdom never receive into their protection, the Subjects of another Kingdom, that are in open Hostility against them. Now there is open War betwixt God, and he wicked, *Psal.* 7. 11. *Zech.* 11. 8, Till they have peace with God, they can claim no protection from God.

3. The promises of protection are made only to Gods people, and where there is no promise, there can be no warrantable claim to protection. 2 *Cor.* 1. 20. 2 *Pet.* 1. 4. Common providence may shelter them for a time, but the Saints only have the keys of promises which open the Chambers of Attributes of God to them.

4. None but the people of God walk in the ways of God, and none but these that walk in his way can groundedly expect his protection; for so runs the promise 2 *Chron.* 15 2. *I am with you, whilst you are with me, i. e.* I am with you, by way of Protection, Direction, Supportation, and Salvation: whilest you are with me in the duties of Obedience, and exercises of your graces, see that you love, fear, and obey me; and then depend upon it, I will look after, and take care of you.

5 To conclude, The people of God only flee to God for sanctuary, and cast themselves upon him for protection. *Psal.* 56. 3. *At what time I am afraid, I will trust in thee. Psal.* 18. 2. *The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust, my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high-tower.* This their confidence in God, and reliance upon him, engages him to protect them in their dangers, *Isa.* 26. 3. All others put themselves out of Gods protection, by making flesh their arm, and so giving the honour of God to the creature, *Jer.* 17. 5. And thus much for clearing this last proposition also. All that remains, will be dispatched in brief and close Application of the Point this opened and confirmed.

CHAP. XII.

Containing the first use of the Point, in several informing Consectaries, and deductions of truth from it.

SECT. I.

Consect. 1. FRom the whole of this Discourse, we may be informed, *What a miserable, and shiftless People all those will be in times of trouble, who have no special interest in God or the Promises.* Sad and lamentable was the case of *Saul*, as it is by himself expressed, 1 *Sam.* 28. 15. *I am sore distressed for the* Philistines *make war against me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me no more.* It is a wonderful, and unaccoun-

accountable thing, how carnal men and women ſubſiſt, and bear up, when their earthly props, and hopes; ſink under, and fail them; ſo long as any creature comfort is left, thither they will retreat, for relief, and ſuccour; but if all fail as quickly they may, Whither will they turn for comfort, having not a God, nor a Promiſe to flee to? which the people of God can do, when all things els fail them, *Heb.* 3. 17. Their different conditions in the day of trouble, is clearly expreſſed in *Zeph.* 2. 3. 4. *Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment, ſeek righteouſneſs, ſeek meekneſs, it may be ye ſhall be hid in the day of the Lords anger.* There is Gods *may be*, which is better ſecurity than Mans *ſhall be*, for their temporary deliverance; But what ſhall become of others, that have no refuge, but in the creature? Why, the miſery and ſhiftleſneſs of their condition; follows in the next words; Gaza *ſhall be forſaken*, *and* Ashkelon *a deſolation, they ſhall drive out* Ashdod *at noon day*, *and* Ekron *ſhall be rooted up*, *i. e.* All their earthly ſecurities ſhall fail them: their ſtrong hold ſhall not ſecure them, they ſhall find no ſhelter in the ſcorching heat of the day of trouble. *Moab*, *ashdod*, and *Ekron*, have no more benefit, by the promiſes made to *Sion*, than the Inhabitants of *Rome*, can claim by the Charter of *London*. If a wicked or hypocritical perſon cry to God in his diſtreſs, he will not hear him, *Prov.* 1. 25, 26. *Job* 27. 9. but will bid him go to his earthly refuges, which he hath choſen; if he go to the promiſes, knock at theſe doors of

hope, they cannot relieve him, being all made in Christ to believers; if to the Name and Attributes of GOD, all the doors are shut against them, *Psal.* 34. 16. There are seven dreadful Aggravations of a wicked man's troubles; (1.) When troubles come upon him, the curse of God follows him into his carnal refuges, *Jer.* 17 5. *Cursed be the man, that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord.* Trouble is the arrow, and this curse the venom of the *arrow*, which makes the *wound incurable.*

2. When troubles fall upon him from without, a guilty conscience will terrifie him from within. So that the mind can give no relief to the body; but both sink under their own weights: it is not so with the people of GOD, they have inward relief under outward pressures, 2 *Cor.* 4. 16.

3. The gusts and storms of wicked mens troubles may blow them into Hell, and hurry them into eternal destruction: if Death march towards them upon the pale Horse, hell always follows him, *Rev.* 6. 8.

4. If troubles and distresses overwhelm their hearts, they can give them no vent or ease by prayer, faith and resignation to God, as his People use to do, 1 *Sam.* 1. 18.

5. When their troubles and distresses come, then comes the hour, and power of their temptation and to shun sorrow they will fall into sin, having no promise to be kept in the hour of temptation, as the Saints have, *Rev.* 3. 10.

6. When their troubles come they will be left alone

alone in the midſt of them; theſe are their burthens, and they alone muſt bear them, Gods gracious, comfortable, ſupporting preſence, is only with his own people.

7. If trouble or death come upon them as a ſtorm, they have no Anchor of Hope to drop in the ſtorm, *The wicked is driven away in his wickedneſs but the righteous hath hope in his death*, *Prov.* 14. 32. By all which it appears that a Chriſtleſs perſon is a moſt helpleſs, and ſhiftleſs creature in the day of trouble.

2. *Conſect* Secondly, Hence it follows, *That Chriſtians ought not to droop like other men in the day of trouble.* A Wicked mans boldneſs, and a Chriſtians cowardlineſs in times of affliction, are alike ungrounded and uncomly; Why ſhould thy heart Chriſtian deſpond and ſink at this rate, upon the proſpect of approaching troubles? Are there not ſafe and comfortable Chambers taken up, and provided for thee againſt that day? Is not the name of the Lord a ſtrong tower into which thou mayeſt run and be ſafe? The heart of a good man, ſaith *Chryſoſtome*, ſhould at all times be like the higher Heavens, ſerene, tranquil and clear, whatever Thunders and Lightnings, Storms and Tempeſts, trouble and terrifie the lower world. If a man have a good roof over his head, where he can ſit dry and warm, what need he trouble himſelf, to hear the Winds roar, the Lightnings flash, and the Reins pour down without doors? Why, this is thy priviledge, Chriſtian, *A man* (to wit, the Man *CHRIST JESUS*) *ſhall be as an hiding place from the wind*,

wind, and a covert from the tempest: as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land; *Isa.* 32. 2. Art thou in Christ and in the Covenant, give me then one good reason for thy dejections in a day of trouble or if thou hast none to give, hearken to these Reasons against it.

1. If thou be in Christ, thy sins are forgiven thee, and why should not a pardoned Soul be a chearful Soul in adversity? Afflictions may buz and hum about thee, like Bees that have lost their sting, but they can never hurt thee.

2. If thou be in Christ, thy GOD is with thee in all thy troubles, and how can thy heart sink or faint in such a presence? Let them that are alone in troubles fail under them, but don't thou do so, that art surrounded with Almighty power, Grace and *Love*, *Isai.* 43, 1, 2.

3. If thou be in Christ, thy greatest afflictions shall prove thy best Friends and Benefactors, *Rom.* 8. 28. Sure then, thou art more afraid than hurt, thou mistakest thy best Friends, for thy worst Enemies; thou and thy Afflictions shall part more comfortably than you met.

4. If thou be in Christ, thy Treasure is safe, thy eternal happiness is out of the reach of thine Enemies, *Luke* 12. 4. *Luke* 10. 42. And if that be safe thou hast no cause to be sad; to droop, and tremble at the hazard of earthly comforts, whilest Heavenly and Eternal things are safe, is as if a man that had gotten his Pardon from the King, and had it safe in his Bosom, should be found weeping upon the way home, because he hath

hath loſt his Staff or Glove. Theſe reaſons are ſtrong againſt the dejections of GODS people under outward troubles: but yet I am ſenſible that all the reaſoning in the world will not prevent their dejections, except they will take pains to clear up their Intereſt in GOD againſt ſuch a day, *Pſal.* 18. 2. And will act their Faith by way of adherence and dependance upon God in the want of former light and evidence, *Iſ.* 50. 10. And laſtly, that they keep their conſcicences pure and inviolate, which will be a ſpring of comfort in the midſt of troubles, 2 *Corin.* 1. 12.

3. *Conſect.* Thirdly, *It hence appears to be the greateſt folly, and vanity in the word to make any thing but God our refuge in the day of trouble.* This Practice as you heard but now, is under Gods curſe, and that which is curſed of God, can never be comfortable to us. It is an honour peculiar to God, the right of Heaven, and therefore curſed Sacriledge to beſtow it on the Creature. We read of ſome that make lies their refuge, and hide themſelves under Falſhood, thinking when the overflowing Scourge comes it ſhall not come nigh unto them, *Iſa.* 28 15, They will truſt to their wits and policies, they will fawn and flatter, lye and diſſemble, caſt themſelves into a thouſand ſhapes and forms to ſave themſelves; but all in vain, the Flood ſhall ſweep away their refuge of lyes. Others make Riches their truſt and confidence, *Prov.* 10. 15. *The rich mans wealth is his ſtrong city.* If Enemies come, their money ſhall be their ranſom; but oh, what a poor refuge will this be? It may betray, but

cannot

cannot ſecure them, *Behold, ſaith God, I will ſtir up the* Medes *againſt them, which ſhall not regard ſilver, and as for gold, they ſhall not delight in it, Iſa.* 13 17. Riches profit not in the day of wrath, *Prov.* 11. 4. *Job* bleſſed God in the day of his adverſity, that he had not made Gold his Hope, or the fine Gold his Confidence, *Job.* 31. 24. Bleſs not thou thy ſelf that thou haſt ſuch things to beſtow thy hope & truſt upon. Others, make Men their Refuge, eſpecially great and powerful Men, but to how little purpoſe is it! *Put not your truſt in Princes, nor in the Son of Man, in whom there is no help Pſal.* 146 3. 4. They cannot keep their Crowns upon their Heads, no, nor their Heads upon their Shoulders, the greateſt Men are but Duſt, and what can Duſt do to Duſt? Three things aggravate their miſery, who miſplace their Confidence by beſtowing it on any Creature. 1. That Creature will certainly deceive them, men are deceitful men, *Pſal* 62. 9. Riches are deceitful riches, 1 *Tim.* 6. 16. Every thing you lean on beſide God, will ſtart aſide, like a deceitful bow, *Pſal.* 78. 57. (2) The diſappointment of your hopes from the creature, will enflame your affliction, and greatly aggravate your ſorrow, 2 *King.* 18. 21. The broken reads of *Egypt* will not only fail, but pierce you. (3) In a word, God will take none into his protection, who make any thing beſides himſelf their hope & confidence; if we fly from God to the creature, God will ſay to the creature, thou ſhalt go, except I have thy dependence, thou ſhalt never have my pro-

protection; where I have no honour thou shalt have no comfort.

4. *Consect.* Fourthly, the former discourse, yields us also this comfortable conclusion, *That what ever confusions, desolations, & troubles be in the earth, the Church and People of God can never be wholly exterminated and destroyed, seeing such a secure refuge is prepared for them of God,* Ps. 102. 28. *The children of thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before thee.* Which is assigned as the true reason of its prepetuity and safety, *Psal.* 48. 3. *God is known in her palaces, for a refuge.* The Church's Enemies have tried the utmost of their policies & powers in all ages against it, but to no purpose: whilest they have been plotting and persecuting, the preserved Remnant have been singing their Song upon *Alamoth*, even praises to their great preserves; though they have no external visible defence, yet are they as safe, as salvation it self can make them, *for salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks*, *Isa.* 26. 1, 2. Four things are exceeding remarkable in the *Churches* preservation: (1) No people were ever so fiercely opposed by the powers of this world, *The Kings of the earth have set themselves, and the Rulers have taken counsel together*, *Ps.* 2. 2. All methods and artifices have been tryed, sometimes to jeer and scoff them out of the Religion: so did the Apostate *Julian*, and sometimes by cruel tortures, to affright them from their Religion; the variety and more than barbarous inhumanity, whereof the Church Histories gives as a sad and amazing account.

account. (2.) Under these cruel Persecutions; they have seemed to be utterly lost, to the eye of sense and reason; *I am left alone*, said *Elijah*, *and they seek my life*, 1 Kings 19. 10. *By whom, Lord, shall* Jacob *arise* said Amos, *for he is very small?* Amos. 7. 2. (3) Notwithstanding all which, the Church hath overlived all its dangers; it is the true *Phœnix*, which hath out lived the Deludge. (4) Such deliverances are proper and peculiar to the Church alone: no people, besides the people of GOD, have such salvations upon record. The great and famous Monarchies of the world, have dashed one another *to pieces*, like *earthen Pot-shards*; ..... *Sic Medus ademit*
Assyrio, Syroq; tulit moderamina Persæ.
And all this by vertue of that promise, Jer. 30. 11. *For I am with thee*, saith the Lord, *to save thee, though I make a full end of all Nations, whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee.*

5. *Consect.* Fifthly, to conclude: If this be so, *then it is a deep and dangerous policy of Satan, to shut up our refuge in GOD against us, as much may be in times of trouble.* Satan, like a cunning Fowler, despairs of getting the birds in his net, except he can beat them out of their coverts; it is therefore his great design, to estrange and alienate the Saints from their GOD, as much as he can, thereby to cut off their retreat to him in times of trouble; a mischief which the people of GOD have alwayes vehemently deprecated, *Psal.* 102. 2. *Jer.* 17. 17. And, O that we would be war of it! and shun this mischief, by our seasonable

ſeaſonable preventing watchfulneſs. There are, among others, three ſpecial Project, of Satan, whereby he manages this miſchievous deſign againſt the people of God.

1. By drawing their Conſciences under gulit, on purpoſe to deſtroy the liberty, freedom, and childlike confidence of their ſouls, in their addreſſes to God. This, if any thing in the world, will do it, *Job* 11. 14, 15. What a loſs will that poor ſoul be at, in times of trouble, whoſe grumbling and condemning conſcience will not ſuffer him to look up chearfully and believingly in the face of its God, and Father, having loſt its ancient freedom at the throne of grace?

2. By prevailing with them to neglect and intermit the courſe of their daily duties, & thereby to let down their communion with God, and in a great meaſure loſe their acquaintance with him. This is a dangerous policy of the Devil, & an unſpeakable prejudice to the ſoul: Oh Chriſtian, take head, of a lazy ſlothful ſpirit, or a vain and earthly heart which will eaſily ſuffer the duties of Religion to be joſtled aſide, and put by for every trivial occaſion; eſpecially beware of ſlight, formal ſuperficial, and hearted performances of duty, which is little better than the intermiſſion of them, it may indeed prevent the ſcandal, but can never give thee the comforts of Religion.

3. By beclouding their intereſt in God, and darkening their title and evidences, by thick clouds of doubts and fears. This is the ſad caſe of

of many a poor Christian, in a day of trouble, with-out fightings, with-in fears. Brethren, I beseech you, think often what those things are, which usually put men into such frights and streights, when eminent dangers stare them in the face, what it is that daunts and damps the hearts of Christians at such times; and as you value the peace and freedom of your souls with God, give not matter for your consciences to reproach you with mis-spent time, indulged sins, neglected duties, formality or hypocrisie in duties, sinister, and by-ends in your transactions with God or man: preserve the purity and peace of your consciences, as you would preserve your two eyes, if by such wiles the evil cannot bar you from your God, or shut up your refuge in him, your outward troubles can do you no hurt.

The second Use of Direction and Advice.

SECT. II.

THe providence of God in these days, giving us such loud warnings of approaching judgment: How are all that are wise in heart, and of understanding of the times, now more especially concerned to clear their interest in these blessed Attributes of God, which have here been opened, as their only refuge in the evil day. Let me therefore persuade, and press you to betake your selves to GOD, your refuge, & strong hold in trouble, and that more especially in these two great duties: *viz.*

1. Of Fervent Supplication.
2. Of Universal Resignation.

1. Betak

1. Betake your ſelves to God by fervent Prayer and Supplication. Let me ſay of theſe times, as Holy Mr. *Perkins* did of his, *Non ſunt iſta litigandi, ſed orandi tempora.* Theſe are on times for Chriſtians to contend and ſtrive one with another, but with their united crys to ſtrive with God, and, among other requeſts, ſtrongly to enforce and follow home, that of *David*, *Pſ.* 71. 2, 3. *Deliver me in thy righteouſneſs, and cauſe me to eſcape, incline thine ear unto me, and ſave me, be thou my ſtrong habitation, whereunto I may continually reſort.* That's a true and weighty Obſervation of *Auſtine*, *Non facile inveniuntur præſidia in adverſitate, quæ non fuerint in pace quæſita. A refuge is not to be found in trouble, except it be provided before hand in peace. For this*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *ſhall every one that is godly pray unto thee, in a time when thou maiſt be found, ſurely in the floods of great waters they ſhall not come nigh unto him*, Pſ. 32 6. Had not *Noah* prepared and ſecured himſelf in the *Ark*, before the floods of great water came, he had not ſate as he did, *Mediis tranquillus in undis: Sleeping quietly, when others were periſhing in the waters.* Gather your ſelves therefore together, before the Decree bring forth; ſeek the Lord, all ye meek of the earth, be more frequent, and more fervent in Prayer, now than ever; you have all the encouragements in the world, to encite you to this duty: the nature of your God is exceeding pitiful, tender, and compaſſionate, *Jam.* 5. 11. The endeared relations betwixt God and you, gives ſingular encouragement of ſucceſs: Shall not

not God hear his own Elect, which cry unto him day and night? *Luke* 18. 7. The ſweet returns & anſwers of former Prayers, are ſo many motives and encouragements, to follow cloſe that thriving trade, *Pſal.* 52. 1, 2, 3. And above all, your prevalent Advocate in the heavens ſhould encourage you, to come frequently and boldly to *the throne of grace*, that you may obtain mercy, and find grace, to help in the time of need, *Heb.* 4. 16 In two things, I ſhall briefly offer a little Direction here: *viz.*

1. As to the matter
2. As to the manner

of Prayer.

1. As to the matter of Prayer, I mean ſuch as the ſtate and condition of the times, now more eſpecially ſuggeſts.

(1) Unite your Prayers, and cry mightily to the Lord, that if it be his good pleaſure, this cup of wrath which ſeems to be mingled & prepared, may paſs from his people. Now cry to God as they are directed to do, *Joel* 2. 17. *Spare thy people O Lord and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen ſhould rule over them: wherefore ſhould they ſay among the people Where is their Gods?* O pray that *England* may not be delivered into the hands of blood thirſty *Papiſts*, that the golden Candleſtick may not be removed; that Idolatry may not return into thoſe places where God hath been ſo ſweetly Worſhiped that a Land ſo peculiarly bleſſed with Goſpel Light, wherein ſo many thouſand ſons, and daughters have been born to God, may not at laſt become an *Aceldama*, a great Shambles,

to

to quarter out the Limbs of his dear Saints: that the pleasant Plant of Reformation, planted with his own right hand, and watered with so many tears, yea with so much blood, many not at last be rooted up by the wild Boar out of the Forrest!

(2) Pray indefinently, That you may be kept from the sins and temptations of the times. O watch and pray, that you enter not into temptation; if you cannot prevail with God, to turn away his anger, yet be importunate with him, that you may be kept from sin, that if you lose your outward peace, you may be able to keep inward peace, that you may never sacrifice your consciences, to save your flesh; that you may never fall under the displeasure of God, to avoid the rage of men. Ah friends, we little think what a fearful havock an hour of temptation will make in such a professing Nation as this is; then shall many be offended, *Matth.* 24. 10. O pray, that you may never give offence to others by scandal, or take offence your selves at the ways of God, whatever sufferings and sharp tryals shall come.

(3) Pray earnestly for the sanctification of all your troubles, to your eternal good; an unsanctified comfort never did any man good, and a sanctified trouble never did any man hurt: be more earnest therefore with God, rather to have your troubles sanctified, than prevented: to get the blessing, than to avoid the smart of them, if they cannot be turned away from you: pray they may be turned to your salvation.

2. Betake your selves to God your Refuge by Faith,

Faith, reſigning & committing all into his hands, *Now the juſt ſhall live by Faith*, *Heb.* 10 38. The more you can truſt God, the more you ſecure your ſelves from danger; he that can live by *Faith*, ſhall never die by *Fear*; and be ſure to inform your ſelves well in two things, *viz.*

1. What it is to truſt God over all. 2. What grounds you have ſo to do.

1. Be well inſtructed in the nature of this duty; there are ſix things imported in ſuch acts of Reſignation.

1. An awakened ſenſe of our dangers and hazards. *At what time I am afraid I will truſt in thee*, *Pſalm* 56. 3. Suffering times are Reſigning times, 1 *Pet.* 4. 19. *Let them that ſuffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their ſouls to him, in well doing; as unto a faithful Creator.* And the greater and nearer our dangers are, the more frequent and vigorous ſhould the actings of our Faith this way be; Be not far from me, for trouble is near.

2. Reſignation to God neceſſarily implys our renunciation, and diſclaiming of all other Refuges. *Aſhur ſhall not ſave us, we will not ride upon horſes, neither will we ſay any more to the work of our hands, ye are our gods, for in thee the fatherleſs findeth mercy*, *Hoſ.* 14. 3. He that relys upon God, much ceaſe from man; Reſignation to GOD excludes not the uſe of lawful means, but it doth exclude dependence upon them.

3. Reſignation to God is always grounded upon an intereſt in God, we have no warrant, nor encouragement to expect protection from him

him in trouble; except we can come to him as Children to a Father: It is the filial relation that gives encouragement to this fiducial Reſignation; and the clearer that relation and intereſt is, the more bold and confident thoſe acts of Faith will be, *Pſalm* 86. 2. *Preſerve my Soul, for I am holy, O thou my God, ſave thy ſervant that truſteth in thee.* And again, *Pſalm* 119. 94. *I am thine ſave me.* I ſpeak not here of the firſt act of Faith, which flows not from an intereſt; but gives the Soul an intereſt in God. Nor do I ſay that poor doubting & timerous Believers whoſe intereſt in him is dark and dubious, have no warrant to reſign themſelves and their concernments into his hands, for it is both their right and duty to do it; But certainly the clearer our intereſt is, the more facile and comfortable will thoſe acts be.

4. The committing acts of Faith imply a full acknowledgement and owning of Gods power to protect us, be the danger never ſo imminent, *Pſalm* 31. 15 *My times are in thy hand, deliver me from the hands of mine enemies, and from them that perſecute me. q.d.* O Lord I am fully ſatisfied, my life is not at the diſpoſe of mine enemies, 'tis not in their hands, but in thine; all the traps and ſnares they lay for it, ſhall not ſhorten one minute of my time, I know thy hand is fully able to protect me, and therefore into thine hands I reſign my ſelf, and all I have.

5. Reſignation involves in it an expectation of help and ſafety from God, when we ſee no way

way of ſecurity from men. *O Lord, ſaith Jehoſhaphat, we have no might, nor no ſtrength, neither know we what to do, but our eyes are unto thee,* 2 *Chron.* 20, 12. So *David, Pſalm* 62, 5, 6 *My ſoul wait thou only upon God, for my expectation is from him, he only is my Rock and my Salvation, he is my defence, I ſhall not be moved.*

6. Reſignation to God imply's the leaving of our ſelves and our concernments with him to be diſpoſed of according to his good pleaſure: the reſigning Soul deſires the Lord to do with him what he will, and is content to take what lot Divine pleaſure ſhall caſt for him, 2 *Sam.* 15 25. *And the King ſaid unto Zadok, carry back the Ark of God into the city, If I ſhall find favour in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again & ſhew me both it and his habitation; but if he thus ſay, I have no delight in thee, behold, here am I, let him do to me as ſeemeth good unto him.* And ſo much of the Nature of this duty, that we may underſtand what to do.

2. Next let me ſhew you what encouragements you that are the *people of God*, have to this duty, and they will appear to be great and many.

1. The Sovereignty and abſolute Dominion of God over all Creatures, is a ſingular encouragement to commit our ſelves into his hands, and truſt him over all, *Pſal.* 59 9 *Becauſe of his ſtrength will I wait upon thee, for God is my defence.* If a man were in danger amidſt a great army of rude and inſolent Souldiers, and were to put himſelf under the protection of any one, It ſhould be the *General* of that Army, to chuſe

in

in such a hand he cannot but be safe, all the Souldiers being at his back. Christian, thy God into whose hands thou committest thy self, is Lord General of all the Hosts and Armies in Heaven and earth: how safe must thou then be in his hands?

2. The unsearchable and perfect Wisdom of GOD is a mighty encouragement to commit our selves into his hands, *With him is plenteous redemption, Psalm* 130. *ult. i. e.* Choice and variety of ways and methods, to save his people; we are, but GOD never is at a losse to find a door for our escape, 2 *Pet.* 2. 9. *The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation.*

3. The infinite tenderness and compassionatnesse of our GOD is a sweet encouragement to resign and commit our selves, and all we have, into his hands, his mercy is incomparably tender towards his people, infinitely beyond whatever any creature felt stirring in its own bowels, towards another that came out of its bowels, *Isai.* 49. 15. This Compassion of GOD engageth the two forementioned Attributes, *viz.* His Power and Wisdom, for the preservation, and relief of his people: As often as distresses befall them. Yea,

4. The very distresses his people are in, do, as it were, awaken the Almighty power of God for their defence and rescue; our distresses are not only proper seasons, but powerful motives to his saving power, *Dut.* 32. 36. *For the Lord shall judge his people, & repent himself for his Servants, when he seeth that their power is gone and there is*

none shut up or left. God makes it an Argument to himself and his people. *Plead it as an Argument with him be not far from me, for trouble is near, for there is none to help.*

5. We have already committed greater and weightier concernments into his hand than the dearest interest we have in this World, we have intrusted our Souls with him, 1 *Pet.* 4.19. 2 *Tim.* 1. 12. Well therefore may we commit the lesser, who have intrusted the greater with him: what are our Lives, Liberties, Estates, and Relations, compared with our Souls, and the eternal safety and happiness of them?

6. The committing act of Faith is the great and only expedient to procure and secure the peace and tranquillity of our minds, amidst the distractions and troubles of the present World: the greatest part of our affliction and trouble in such days, is from the working of our own thoughts; *these torments from within are worse than any from without; and the resignation of all to God by Faith is their best and only cure, Prov.* 16. 3. *Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established.* A blessed calmness of mind a sweet tranquillity and settlement of thoughts follows Immediately hereupon, *Psal.* 94. 19. Oh then, leave all with GOD, and quietly expect a comfortable issue: and for the better settlement and security of thy peace in times of distraction and trouble, I beseech the Reader, carefully to watch and guard against these two evils.

1. *Cau.* Beware of *infidelity* and *distrustfulness*

of God and his Promiſes which ſecretly lurks in thy heart, *and is hugely apt to bewray it ſelf; when great diſtreſſes and troubles befall thee, thou wilt know it by ſuch ſymtomes as theſe.* 1. *In an over haſty and eager deſire after preſent deliverance,* Iſai. 51 14. *The captive exile haſteneth that he may be looſed, and that he ſhould not die in the pit, nor that his bread ſhould fail.* The leſs Faith, always the more impatience & the more ability to believe, the more patience to wait. 2. It will diſcover it ſelf in our readineſs to cloſe with and catch at unſul mediums and methods of deliverance, *Iſai.* 30. 15 16. And this is the handle of temptation and occaſion of Apoſtacy. *But he that believeth will not make haſte, Iſai.* 26. 18. No more haſte than good ſpeed: 3. It will ſhew it ſelf in diſtracting cares and fears about events which will rack the mind with various and endleſs tortures.

2. *Caution,* Beware of dejection and deſpondency of mind in evil times, take heed of a poor low ſpirit that will preſently ſink, and give up its hopes upon every appearance and face of trouble: it is a promiſe made unto the righteous, *Pſalm* 112 7. He ſhall not be afraid of evil tidings, his heart is fixed truſting in the Lord. The truſting of GOD fixes the heart, and the fixing of the heart, fortifies it againſt Fear, but I know what many poor Chriſtians will ſay in this caſe, their timorouſneſs and deſpondency ariſes not ſo much from the greatneſs of outward evils, as from the darkneſs and doubtfulneſs of their ſpiritual and inward condition, which doubtleſs

s the very truth of the case, which brings me to the last use of this point.

The third *Use*, Search and examine your hearts Christians, whether those graces and qualifications to which GOD hath promised protection in evil times, may not be found upon an impar i l search in your hearts, among which I will single out three principal ones as the proper matters of your Self-examination, *viz.*

1. Uprightness of Heart and Way. 2. Humiliation for your own and others sins. 3 Righteousness in doing, and meekness in suffering the will of God.

1. Uprightness and Integrity of heart and way. To this qualification belong many sweet promises of protection, such is that, *Prov.* 2. 7. *He is a buckler to them that walk uprightly, Psalm* 7. 10. *My defence is of* GOD, *which saveth the upright in heart.* If your hearts be true to GOD, these promises shall be truely performed to you, but beware you deceive not your selves in so great a point as this is: thy heart cannot be an upright heart, Except, 1. It be a renewed heart; the natural heart is always a false heart, 'tis only Regeneration that gives the heart a right temper and frame: all the duties and labours in the World can never keep that heart right in its course, which is not first set right for God, by a Principle of Renovation. (2) We cannot judge our selves upright, except uprightness be the settled frame and standing bent of our hearts *Psal.* 119. 112, 117. It is not our integrity in one or two single actions, but in the gener-

cours

to this ble
course and comp
ways, that will
3. Then ma
hen the d
eye keeps
o iniq
incer
at all
by t
hea
ai



